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1891

THE

ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY'S MISSION

TO THE

ASSYRIAN CHRISTIANS.

I.—*Narrative of a Visit to the Assyrian Christians in* 1884. *By Athelstan Riley.*

II.—*Report of the Foundation of the Mission in* 1886. *By Athelstan Riley.*

WITH A MAP.

LONDON:
SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE,
NORTHUMBERLAND AVENUE, CHARING CROSS, W.C.
And to be had at the Office of the Assyrian Mission, 7, Dean's Yard, Westminster.

1891.

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A GUIDE

TO THE DUE ORDER AND TRUE MEANING OF

THE MARRIAGE SERVICE.

To be given or sent to the parties about to be married, when application is made for a license or for publication of banns.

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1. Notice of the day for the marriage should be given to the Rector or Vicar at least two days before, and he will arrange the hour for the Marriage, which by law must not begin before eight in the morning, nor end later than three in the afternoon.

2. At the time appointed the bride is brought into Church, not by the bridegroom, but by her father or someone appointed by him. She should walk on his left side, with the bridesmaids following her. The man comes in before by himself, or with some male friend.

[NOTE.—It is not right that the woman should be brought to Church and given away by any young friend. Her father is the proper person, and if he cannot come, he should, if possible, provide some friend or relative old enough to be her father, to act for him by his authority.

Neither the bride nor the bridegroom should wear any gloves at any time during the Service.]

3. In the first part of the Service the man and the woman stand facing the Priest, to hear and answer him; but after she has been given away by her father, they face towards each other, to "pledge their troth either to other" and for "the giving and receiving of the ring"

(No. 2334)

THE SERVICE.

When you come to the appointed place in the Church [usually at the entrance of the chancel], kneel down, and ask God to be with you and in mercy to bless your marriage. Then stand up and listen.

First, you will be told how honourable and holy is the State of Matrimony, instituted by God Himself and blessed by Jesus Christ —with what great seriousness and reverence it should be taken in hand—and the grave purposes for which it has been ordained. Into this holy estate you are now coming to be joined.

Then you will be asked very solemnly to say if you know any reason why you may not lawfully be married, that is, if either of you have a husband or wife still living; or if you are too nearly related to each other; or if you have made any false statement about yourselves when you gave your names for the banns or license; or if you are under age and have not the consent of your parents or guardians.

Then the Priest will ask both of you, first one and then the other, whether you are willing and desirous to be married together; and each must answer "I will."

Then the woman's father, or someone in his place, standing on her right side (between her and the man) will give his consent to the marriage by taking her right hand and giving it to the Priest, not to the man; and the Priest will then give her hand to the man; because a woman cannot give herself to the man. And the man will receive her hand in his and hold it, saying after the Priest, "I [John] take thee [Mary] to my wedded wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part, and

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be faithful; and not only because the Priest has joined your hands; but because Almighty God Himself has been present there, and has taken you at your word, and sealed your covenant by the hands of His minister, and bound you to it; and "what God hath joined together it is not for man to put asunder."

Now you will stand up, and a Psalm is said or sung, while you follow the Priest as he goes up to the Altar; and the rest of the Service is said at the Altar, because it was always meant, as the Prayer Book tells us, that the newly-married persons should receive the Communion at the time of their marriage, or at the first opportunity after it, and so begin their married life "in the Lord."

At the Altar steps you kneel while the Priest prays over you; but you stand up for the Address or Sermon, and kneel again at the end of it for prayer.

[If flowers are to be strewed before the bride and bridegroom on leaving Church, they should not be thrown down whole with the leaves and stalks, but the blossoms should have been pulled to pieces into a basket, and only their separated petals should be strewed. This requires only a very few blossoms, and is far prettier and more cleanly. The rude custom of throwing rice should be discouraged, and is forbidden at the Church door or in the Church-yard.]

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.
LONDON: NORTHUMBERLAND AVENUE, W.C.; 43, QUEEN VICTORIA STREET, E.C.
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Susan
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VAN
Akowanlkh
Wastan
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Karkan
Tyrchan
Chiawash
Suzus Dagh
Soort
Kiu
Süliwa Dagh
Eyndyk
Judy Mountains
RIVER TIGRIS
Ijezireh Ibn-Omar
Kasr Della
Dergulen
Bidar
Bohtan Su or Eastern Tigris
MIRAN KURDS
Tauk
Shatak
Nurduk
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Kuriki Mts
Sarspido
Ashitha
Zar Tha
Lizan
Tchal
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Amadia
Bibaydi
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Valley of Bewar
R. Chabur
Zachu
Feischabur
Dawudia
Valley of the Supna
Chara Mountains
Chordepin
Bebozi
Semiel
Sheikh Adi
Rabban Hormuzd
Butman Dagh
Alkosh
Bar Idri
Ain Siffin
Tellisker
Telkeif
MOSUL
Nineveh
RIVER TIGRIS
Chair Mts
Akra R.
Seri Sadah
Reschwan
Erbil
(Arbela)
Kara D.
Choi Sandchak
Pishder
Albagh
Tchary
Shamsdin
Baradost
Tobi Gerdi
Nautscha
Schino
Tura Limitka
Piran
Gader R.
Soldus
Merhemetarad
Miandoab
Bojiran
Souchbulak
Ledshan
Adkun
Rowandiz
Rowandiz R.
Zab
Herr
Holer
Baladi
Pishder
Choi
Kotur R.
Sokmanabad
Dilman
Salmas
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Gavilan
Superghan
Nazlu R.
Beranduz
Targavar
Margavar
Diza
Mar Khanishu
Tura Golka
Tura Jeelu
Gavar
Shamsdin
Riaschan R.
Beranduz R.
URMI
Guktapar
Seir
Ardishai
Takleh Turkman
Anzel
Dismer
Budiga
Minchambar
Miran Dagh
Anzal
Erwanak
TABRIZ
Salian Rud
Adschy
Demir
Dehi Chergan
Maragha
Bimah
AZERBIJAN
LAKE URMI
Tchary
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NARRATIVE OF A VISIT TO THE ASSYRIAN CHRISTIANS IN KURDISTAN.

Undertaken at the request of the Archbishop of Canterbury, in the Autumn of 1884.

HIS Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury requested Mr. Athelstan Riley, M.A., of Pembroke College, Oxford, F.R.G.S., to undertake a journey in the autumn of 1884 to North-Western Persia and Kurdistan, with a view of ascertaining the present condition of the Assyrian or Nestorian Christians, and the state of the Mission sent thither in 1881 by the late Archbishop Tait and the Archbishop of York.

Mr. Riley promptly undertook the journey, without putting the Assyrian Christians Committee to any expense, and the following is the account of his labours.

It may be noticed, in explanation of a passage in his letter to the Archbishop, that as Mr. Riley was passing the chief centre of the Armenian Church, the Archbishop of Canterbury took the opportunity of interchanging friendly communications with the superior authorities of that Church; similarly, the salutations of his Grace were conveyed to the Exarch of Georgia, as the highest representative of the Holy Orthodox Eastern Church met with on the journey.

My Lord Archbishop,

At your Grace's request I shall describe in this present letter the principal details of my recent journey to Armenia and Kurdistan. The general Report on the Assyrian Church I have added separately for the sake of distinctness, and have touched therein upon various matters well known to your Grace, which I considered proper to insert for the information of those to whom your Grace might be pleased to submit it.

Accompanied by Mr. H. P. Cholmeley, B.A., of Magdalen College, Oxford, I left England on August 20th and travelled *viâ* Warsaw, Kieff, and Rostoff, to Vladikavkas, and then across the Caucasus by the Dariel Pass to Tiflis, which we reached in thirteen days. The Exarch of Georgia being absent from his metropolis I was unable personally to convey your Grace's salutation, so I wrote to his Holiness to express

the hope that I should see him on my return, and then left Tiflis as soon as my arrangements were complete.

Etchmiadzin. Interview with the Armenian Patriarchal Vicar.

On September 8th we reached the convent of Etchmiadzin at the foot of Mount Ararat, and on the following day I had an interview with Archbishop Megerditch, President of the Holy Synod and Patriarchal Vicar in absence of the Catholicos, the vacancy caused by the death of the late Head of the Armenian Church not having been then filled up, and presented to him your Grace's letter. The rector of the college, Dr. Mesrop Djermak, formerly a Mechitarist of Venice, but now a Gregorian Armenian, who speaks French and understands English, acted as my interpreter.

This rector is the most learned of all the ecclesiastics of Etchmiadzin: we had many conversations together respecting the Anglican and Armenian Churches, and he expressed a wish to read some works of English theology with a view to enlighten the Armenians as to our doctrines and discipline.

But the space into which I must necessarily compress this letter prevents any further digression from the main subject of my journey; I will only say that the Armenian authorities received us with the utmost cordiality.

Tabriz.

On September 13th we crossed the Persian frontier at Djulfa, and reached Tabriz on the 16th. Here to our surprise we found the Rev. Rudolph Wahl, who had arrived with all his family a few days previously, having been forcibly expelled from Urmi by the governor of the province on September 6th. The facts connected with this expulsion are already in your Grace's possession. Finding that the case of Mr. Wahl was in the hands of her Majesty's Minister at Teheran, and that I could not be of any service in hastening his return to Urmi, I arranged for our departure in a week's time. Before leaving I paid a visit to the Turkish Consul-General, and at his request telegraphed to Constantinople for permission to cross the Ottoman frontier; the answer being unsatisfactory, a further explanatory telegram was necessary, and the Consul promised to send the result by telegraph to Urmi, as I should be unable to proceed into Turkish territory without express orders from him, which he was not then in a position to give. I also telegraphed to your Grace to explain my difficulty.

American Presbyterian Mission at Tabriz.

There is a Protestant Mission at Tabriz (American Presbyterian), the staff of which consists of three ministers (one of them being a physician), an agent of the American Bible Society, and three lady-workers. It maintains two schools; one for boys, with thirty or forty pupils, mostly day scholars; the other for girls, with twenty-three pupils, nearly all boarders. The girls' school, a substantial two-storied building of burnt brick, with a house for the medical missionary, the whole standing in a large garden in the centre of the town, cost, including land, £3,000. There is also a chapel belonging to the Mission. The work is almost entirely amongst the Armenian colony, but latterly the Missionaries have attempted to make converts amongst the Mussulmans, with the result, it is said, of seriously endangering the safety of the whole European community.

Spiritual condition of the English at Tabriz.

There are about seven adult English people in Tabriz, not including the Consul-General and Mrs. Abbott, who at the time of my visit were in England. These are, of course, permanently without the ministrations of religion. Although Mr. Wahl in his hurried departure from Urmi had neglected to bring the sacred vessels with him, I prevailed upon him to celebrate the Eucharist, and give Communion to such as desired it, which was done during our stay, on St. Matthew's Day. All the English children are baptised; the Consul generally administers this sacrament, in the absence of a priest.

Chosrova. The Chaldæan Church.

We left Tabriz in caravan on September 23rd, and took the usual road to Urmi, round the northern side of the lake. On the way we stayed two nights at Chosrova, where we were hospitably entertained by the French Missionaries. The plain of Salmas, in which Chosrova is situated, has a large Christian population, Armenian and Assyrian, scattered about in different villages round the town of Dilman. The Latin Mission has been established for over thirty years, and although it has made no progress amongst the Armenians, it has consolidated and enlarged that part of the Assyrian nation, which, since the latter part of the seventeenth century, has been united with Rome under the name of the "Chaldæan Church."[1] I believe there are but very few of the Old Assyrians left in the plain of Salmas; here the Latins are paramount, although a small Protestant propaganda has been established under one of the American Missionaries from Urmi.*

Latin Mission at Chosrova.

The Mission at Chosrova is worked by six Roman Catholic clergymen, consisting of four French Lazarists and two Armenian Mechitarists, who have just arrived from Venice. There are also seven Sisters of Charity. It maintains a seminary or theological college for training young ecclesiastics; twenty students are boarded, lodged, and clothed, at the average annual cost of £28 apiece. The Latins have thus discovered the most effective way of assisting the Chaldæan Church, and in all the villages I afterwards visited, where there was a Chaldæan community, I invariably found the priest to be a well-instructed, intelligent, and polite man, generally a leader in the village, and always a little oasis of civilisation in the desert of barbarism.[2]

Chaldæan Mistrust of Rome.

The native Chaldæan Bishop resides at Chosrova, and his church is just outside the Mission House. It is to all intents and purposes a Western Church, and the Old Assyrian rites have been so Latinised that the ordinary spectator would fail to discover wherein they differed from the modern Roman; the altar and the vestments are

[1] I have used throughout the word "Assyrian" to denote the Nestorian Church and Nation, as being the title by which they are known in this country. They call themselves *Syrians* (Soorayee), claiming a Jewish descent, *Nestorians* and *Chaldæans* (see the Patriarch's letter, page 18): but the last name is invariably employed by Europeans to denote the Latin Assyrians.

[2] The Chaldæan Bishops and priests receive regular stipends from France.

* *In subsequent Mission publications the practice of giving the title of "Chaldæan" to the Uniat Assyrians exclusively has been abandoned. Besides "Assyrian," this people is known by the name of "(East) Syrian," "Chaldæan" and "Nestorian;" and although the multiplicity of titles is confusing, each has to be occasionally employed.*

purely Latin. And here it is the place to mention that there is a large and increasing spirit of discontent amongst the Chaldæans with respect to the Latin Missionaries. The dogma of the Papal Infallibility, the ever-tightening grasp of the Roman See, the suppression of many ancient customs, have produced such mistrust that it needs but a little to convert these smothered feelings into an open rupture with Rome. It is rumoured that an attempt is to be made to forbid the marriage of the clergy altogether, but I can hardly believe that the Vatican authorities will be guilty of this shortsighted policy. This discontent is not confined to the laity; it is said that even the Bishops are getting alarmed, and I myself have heard from the lips of a priest that had been educated at Chosrova: "Though we are Catholics and have left the heresy of Nestorius, we have nothing to do with Rome, we will never be mere *Romans*." Some of these clergymen make no secret of their wish to have an Anglican Mission amongst them; up to the present their only choice has been between Nestorianism and the orthodox faith respecting the doctrine of the Incarnation under the Roman Catholics.

Gavilan.

From Chosrova we went in eight hours to Gavilan, and stayed there for Sunday. In this Christian village and in the adjoining one of Jamal Abbat the three communities are represented in the following proportion:—

Old Assyrians	300
Papal Assyrians or Chaldæans	200
Protestant Assyrians	24

The two latter bodies have each a church and schools, the Americans having the largest buildings. The Old Assyrians have two churches, but no schools. All dwell together in harmony, the bonds of nationality proving stronger than the opposing forces of religion. The Chaldæan priest hoped we should do something for the Old Assyrians. "For," said he, "the French look after us and the Americans protect the Protestants, but the members of the old church have no one to care for them, nobody gives them books or schools and the Mussulmans oppress them horribly because they know that neither of the two Missions at present established will stir a finger in their behalf." We stayed at the house of the native Protestant pastor, and at my request the Old Assyrian priest celebrated the Liturgy on Sunday morning, which we attended, and after service I addressed a few words to his flock. I have purposely described the condition of this village as an example of many others in the plain of Urmi.

Arrival at Urmi. Interview with the Sala.

We reached Urmi on September 29th, and put up at the empty house of Mr. Wahl. The Assyrians of the town complained to me that they had been prevented from coming out to meet us by the Serparast, or Governor of the Christians (a Mohammedan), and so the next day I waited upon the Sala, or Supreme Governor of the province,[1] to ask for an explanation respecting this unfriendly action, and also respecting the expulsion of your Grace's representative, Mr. Wahl. I was received with extreme courtesy, and in the course

[1] Hassan Ali Khan.

of a three hours' conversation his Excellency thought proper to deny altogether the fact of the forcible expulsion, and as to my first complaint promised to give orders that all the Christians should come to me, and expressed his intention of paying me a visit as a public mark of honour. Seeing that the Sala was clearly anxious to resume friendly relations with our English Mission, I thought it best to respond to these advances, but I took care that he should visit me in Mr. Wahl's house, which he did with some ceremony two days afterwards. His Excellency has held the post of Persian Minister both at Paris and St. Petersburg, is a cultivated gentleman, and one of the chief men in Persia. The French and American Missionaries manage to get on very well with him.

American Presbyterian Mission in the plain of Urmi.

We stayed four days in Urmi, our time being occupied in receiving a constant stream of priests and deacons, who came from all parts of the plain to converse with us. The Protestant (Presbyterian) Mission from America has its headquarters at Urmi, with a large establishment in the city and a central training school, theological, medical, and secular, about half an hour beyond the walls. Many chapels and schools are scattered over the plain, and Mission stations, strongly built and surrounded by walls, which go by the name of "castles." Six ministers, one a physician, are attached to the Mission, who live in their own houses with their wives and families. These Americans are constantly building and buying fresh houses and land. I was informed that this summer alone they had built private residences in three or four places. Apparently they have large sums of money at their command, derived partly from America and partly, I believe, from England. They go by the name of "English," and I have frequently had extreme difficulty in persuading the natives that "Englishmen" were not necessarily American Presbyterians. On one occasion we were very nearly driven out of a large Armenian village, where we had craved hospitality for the night, because the inhabitants declared that "Englishmen" only came for the purpose of drawing away people from their ancient faith.

Latin Mission at Urmi.

The Latins have a fine church, large Mission buildings, and a staff consisting of a Bishop, four Lazarist priests, a lay-helper, and some Sisters of Charity, all French.

Difficulties in crossing the Turkish frontier. Final interview with Sala.

I found it desirable to leave Urmi earlier than I had intended. The Turkish Vice-Consul informed me that far from being able to assist me in crossing the frontier, he had received absolute instructions from Tabriz to prevent my doing so. I therefore despatched one telegram to the Turkish Ambassador in London to say that I was still in difficulties, and another to the Turkish Consul at Tabriz to tell him that I proposed to cross the frontier on the following day, and then left Urmi on October 3rd. Before my departure I paid a return visit to the Sala, when his Excellency asked me to inform her Majesty's Minister in Teheran that having inquired into the matter of Mr. Wahl's expulsion I was satisfied that his (the Sala's) explanation was correct. I replied that I had that day heard that Mr. Wahl was on his way back to Urmi, and that if on my return from the mountains in three weeks time I found that he had been received by his Excellency,

and that all was satisfactorily arranged, I would take care to report favourably on the matter when I returned to England. The Sala replied that I might count on him.

Departure from Urmi and arrival at the Mattran's House.

An escort was sent with us to the frontier. We pursued the ordinary road to Diza for some time and then, dismissing the escort, turned off abruptly towards the south, crossed the frontier by a wild mountain path, and arrived safely at the Mattran's house in Shamsdin on the second day from Urmi.

I adopted this course because your Grace had informed me that you were particularly anxious that I should see the Mattran,[1] and fearing that the Ottoman authorities on the frontier (owing, perhaps, to an error in the transmission of orders from Constantinople) might feel obliged to prevent my entrance into Turkish Kurdistan, I thought it imprudent to place myself in their hands.

I presented your Grace's letter to the Mattran, received his reply, spent a considerable time in conversation with him, and left Shamsdin on the second day for Diza in the plain of Gavar, the headquarters of Mr. Wahl for the last two years, and the residence of the Pasha. I might have avoided Diza and have gone direct to Kochanes, but it was represented to me that on account of the Kurds it would be better not to penetrate farther into the country without the recognition of the authorities and a proper escort, and as I had now finished my most important business I did not mind running the risk of expulsion.

Arrival at Diza; hostility of Pasha.

On our arrival at Diza I found that the favourable communication from Constantinople had not arrived. The Pasha refused to allow us to proceed to the Patriarch's village, was annoyed at our having seen the Mattran, and informed us that we must not visit any of the Christian villages in the plain of Gavar, nor leave the town. However, we managed to employ the time which we were forced to spend at Diza in visiting those villages in which Mr. Wahl had opened schools. In two days the telegrams which I had sent to the Minister of Foreign Affairs at Constantinople and to her Majesty's Ambassador were answered, and I was allowed to proceed to the Patriarch. I arranged that Mr. Cholmeley should return to Urmi with Mr. Wahl (who had joined us in the mountains), and arrange matters with the Sala. I therefore wrote to the Sala begging him to receive Mr. Wahl with Mr. Cholmeley, and left Diza on October 11th. My caravan reached Kochanes the following morning. The Patriarch was absent, and I had to wait a week for his arrival, the time being spent in frequent conversations with the Rabban Johnan, the chief theologian amongst the Assyrians, and venerated for the holiness of his life.*

Interview with the Patriarch of the East.

On Friday, October 17th, Mar Shimoon, Patriarch of the East, arrived; I transacted the necessary business with him, presented your Grace's letter, received the reply,[2] and started for Urmi on Monday, October 20th. Early on the third day after leaving Kochanes I

[1] I regret to learn that news has recently been received of the death of the Mattran.
[2] See Appendix.
* *This pious and learned man died in* 1886, *a fortnight after my second visit to Kochanes. See "Report on the Foundation of the Mission in* 1886," *page* 8.

reached Urmi, found that Mr. Cholmeley had visited several villages in the plain, and had furthermore most satisfactorily effected the reconciliation between the Sala and Mr. Wahl.

Return to Tiflis; interview with the Exarch of Georgia.

We left Urmi the following day, and taking the road *viâ* Dilman and Choi crossed the Russian frontier and reached Tiflis on the last day of October. We remained here three days, in the course of which we visited the Exarch of Georgia, and spent two hours in interesting conversation with his Holiness, who expressed his gratification at my visit. The following day, being Sunday, I attended in academical dress the celebration of the Liturgy in the chapel of the Exarchate.

Return to England.

We left Tiflis on November 3rd, and travelled to England without stopping, overland *via* the Caucasus and the South of Russia, reaching London on November 11th.

And now, my Lord Archbishop, I have only to deliver up my Report, which has assumed larger proportions than I anticipated, and to fulfil my duty to your Grace, and my pledges to the Assyrians, by submitting their condition and their necessities to your Paternal wisdom. I ask your Grace's blessing and beg to subscribe myself,

Your Grace's most obedient and dutiful servant,

ATHELSTAN RILEY.

PEMBROKE COLLEGE, OXFORD.
November 30th, 1884.

GENERAL REPORT.

I. ON THE WORK OF THE EXISTING MISSION.

Appeal from the Assyrian to the English Church. The Mission of Mr. Wahl.

THE Rev. Rudolph Wahl, an Austrian by birth, but in Anglican Orders (of the American Church), was sent out to Kurdistan in the spring of 1881 by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, to minister to the needs of the Assyrian Christians, in answer to the many appeals made by them to the Anglican hierarchy. The history of our connection with this ancient Church is briefly the following. Since the year 1838 the Assyrian ecclesiastical authorities have been imploring the help of the Church of England. In 1842 the Rev. Dr. Badger and Mr. J. P. Fletcher were sent out to Kurdistan, but were withdrawn the following year. In 1868 a fresh appeal was made by certain Assyrian Bishops and priests, in consequence of which the Rev. E. L. Cutts was despatched on a Mission of inquiry in 1876. He was received with great enthusiasm by the whole Assyrian people, and has published an interesting account of his journey under the title of *Christians under the Crescent in Asia*, which forms a supplement to Dr. Badger's lengthy and valuable treatise, *The Nestorians and their Rituals*. The result of Mr. Cutts's report was the sending out of Mr. Wahl. The cost of this Mission has been borne by the S.P.G. and the S.P.C.K., Mr. Wahl receiving annually £300 stipend, £72 for school expenditure, and occasional small grants for travelling.

Establishment at Diza.

He first established himself at Kochanes and opened a school there, but owing, I believe, to a disagreement between himself and the Patriarch, he left this village in the autumn of 1881, and established

himself at Diza. Here he remained until this summer, when believing his life to be in danger from the hostility of the authorities, he crossed into Persia and bought a house at Urmi,[1] which he had to leave a fortnight later, as I have stated in the account of my journey.

Removal to Urmi.

When at Diza, Mr. Wahl employed the £72 in the following ways:—

1. In the stipend of a native secretary.

2. In paying small sums to individual priests to enable them to devote some of their time to giving elementary instruction to children in their villages during the winter months, and in providing school materials.

Schools.

The schools opened last winter were in the following villages:—

In the plain of Gavar (Turkey),
- Gagoran, with about 25 children.*
- Zeezan ,, ,, 26 ,, *
- Khiat ,, ,, 16 ,, *
- Persalan ,, ,, 15 ,, *
- Vazeer-Arva ,, 20 ,,

In the district of Targavar (Persia),
- Marwana, with about 14 children.*
- Ombi[2] ?
- Tullee ?

In the district of Shamsdin (Turkey),
- Binter, with about 25 children.

In the plain of Urmi (Persia),
- Mar Sergis, with about 18 children,

and one school in the district of Jeelu (Turkey), to which Mr. Wahl informed me he had contributed but had never visited it, and the Bishop of Jeelu was not acquainted with it.

The schools are held in the priests' houses. Instruction is given in reading and writing in modern Syriac, and in reading the Psalms. Beyond this I do not think many progress. Dogmatic instruction is not given; the children are supposed to receive this in church. These schools are, I believe, almost the only work of the existing Mission in Kurdistan. The printing-press sent out with Mr. Wahl is idle, because the necessary permissions have not been obtained from the authorities in either country, and also because *Jacobite* instead of *Syro-Chaldaic* type was provided by mistake. No instruction has been given to priests or to candidates for ordination, but Mr. Wahl has occasionally given addresses, with the assistance of his secretary, in some of the village churches.

Ignorance of Native Teachers.

To give an instance of the native ignorance; on questioning one of these priest-teachers, I found that his faith as to the mystery of the Incarnation was that by the power of God the Blessed Virgin brought

1 I have written the name of this town as it is pronounced by the native Christians the Persians call it *Ouroumiyah*.*

* *I believe "Urumi" is nearer the Mussulman pronunciation.*

* All these villages I visited, and personally inquired into the working of the schools.

2 I saw the superintendent of this school.

3 This school is not far from the Mattran's house.

forth a man who was called Christ; that during His whole life Christ was but a man, not God in any sense, but that when He worked miracles it was by the power of God, as the prophets of old were enabled to perform them; that Christ was crucified and was buried, being mere man, and that afterwards God took Him up to heaven, where He became God and was no longer man, still existing in heaven, simply God. This poor priest was quite ready to acknowledge his ignorance, and listened attentively whilst I explained to him the Catholic doctrine of the Incarnation; his heresy was simply the result of his never having had any religious teaching. I believe there are not six men in the whole Assyrian Church of sufficient theological learning to be teachers of the faith. To employ ignorant priests to teach even children is only to provide blind guides for the blind, and it is not in this way that this ancient Church will be saved, and brought back into the old paths.

Official Sanction required.

The formal permission of the authorities, Turkish and Persian, should be obtained for the establishment of the Mission; otherwise there result such conflicts with the powers that be as not only to hinder the work of the Mission, to ruin English and European prestige in the eyes of the natives, both Christian and Mohammedan, and to be a source of anxiety to the Missionary and trouble to Her Majesty's Consuls, but also to inflict positive cruelty on the very people we wish to help by creating difficulties between them and their rulers, which only end in trouble to the unfortunate Christians while we stand by and are powerless to help them.

I believe that Mr. Wahl has honestly tried to do his best; that the money entrusted to him for schools has been properly spent, and that all murmurings on the subject can be entirely accounted for, partly by the natural avarice of the Assyrians, and partly by their refusal to believe that the wealthy Church of England could have allotted so small a sum to the work of their religious regeneration. I have carefully examined and checked Mr. Wahl's accompts of moneys paid and find them to be correct.

2. On the Present Condition of the Assyrian Church.

Nestorian Heresy.

The Assyrian Christians were cut off from the communion of the Catholic Church in the fifth century after Christ, because they refused to join in anathematizing Nestorius, who had been condemned by the Third Œcumenical Council for his heretical opinions respecting the Incarnation of our Blessed Lord. Their ancient theological treatises are undoubtedly tainted with heresy, and although they are at present too ignorant to hold Nestorian doctrines intelligently, still ignorance will not purge heresy, and as a Church they refuse to this day to employ orthodox language by objecting to the title "Theotokos," or "Mother of God," and by using the expression "Two Persons," in speaking of the Nature of Christ.[1] They habitually speak of the

[1] Not being acquainted with Syriac, I am unable to say how far this expression is the result of confusion of language. The whole matter is fully discussed in Dr. Badger's *Nestorians and their Rituals*, with notes by the late Dr. Neale.

great heresiarch as "Saint Nestorius," and the popular estimation puts him at least on the level of the Holy Apostles.

Next in importance comes the abuse of hereditary Bishops, which seems to be a corruption of the last three hundred years. The choice being thus limited to single families, the sees are frequently filled with unworthy prelates.

Ecclesiastical discipline.

Ecclesiastical discipline is at such a low ebb that bad or careless ecclesiastics seem to be left unpunished. At the present time, of the three Bishops whose sees are in the Plain of Urmi, two have been absent in Europe for the last three years, one having utterly refused to return to his people, the other (so the Exarch of Georgia informed me) is now on his way home, simply because he could not get himself supported any longer in Russia; the third Bishop has not left his country, but is reported, whether truly or not, to be thoroughly worthless and immoral. No steps had been taken to deprive these Bishops, but on my representing the state of affairs to the Mattran, he told me that he intended to call a Synod and try to depose them, and the Patriarch promised me that if we established a Mission station at Urmi, he would consecrate fresh Bishops to take the place of the absentees, but that without English support it would be useless to do so, as they could not stand against foreign proselytism.

Spiritual destitution at Urmi.

Since the abandonment of the Old Assyrians of Urmi by their spiritual rulers they have become so disorganised that there have been no services on Sundays in the church, but only occasional Eucharists on festivals. We recommenced the usual services on the Sunday while Mr. Cholmeley was at Urmi, and I left instructions that a priest was to be found to carry them on through the winter, under the superintendence of Mr. Wahl. There is a large body of Christians in and about Urmi who have once been either Presbyterians or Chaldæans, but who now belong to no community in particular, wishing to return to their own Church, but having no one to take them by the hand.

The following is a list of the Assyrian Bishops as furnished to me by the Mattran, and corrected and enlarged by the Patriarch*:—

Bishops with their Sees.

Mar Shimoon, Patriarch of the East, resides at Kochanes.
Mar Joseph Hnan-Ishu (or Joseph Levi), Mattran or Metropolitan of the East, resides at Shamsdin.
Mar Johannan of Shamsdin.
Mar Sor-Ishu of Gavar.
Mar Sleeva of Gavar, now ministering to the necessities of the Assyrian colony in Erivan (Russia Armenia), having escaped thither from persecution.
Mar Sergis of Jeelu.
Mar Ishuyou of Amidia.
Mar Johnan of Ekri.
Mar Shimoon, Mar Touma } of Artel.
Mar Joseph of Schoch.

* *For subsequent and corrected lists of the episcopate see more recent Mission publications.*

Mar Oraham, Patriarch-designate, a young man of twenty-two, first cousin of the Patriarch, and consecrated by him last Easter. He lives at Kochanes.

All the above are in Turkish Kurdistan. On the Persian side of the frontier there are in the Plain of Urmi:

Mar Goriel of Urmi, now in Russia.

Mar Johannan of Gavilan, now in England (and said to be insane).

Mar Johnan of Superghan.

Untrustworthiness and avarice of Assyrians.

The two principal faults in the Assyrian character are untruthfulness and avarice. To proceed on a begging tour to England or America is the highest ambition of an Assyrian ; for many have returned to their native land to pass their days in comparative wealth owing to the misplaced zeal of honest and charitable people in England, who are no match for the subtle Oriental. The appeal is usually on behalf of a school, in rare cases there is some establishment of this kind in existence, and if the applicant be more than ordinarily honest he may spend a third or even a half of the sum he has raised in England on his school when he returns. *Any* Oriental begging for religious purposes should be suspected, but no support without the most careful inquiry should be given to persons calling themselves Nestorians, Persian Christians, Reformed Nestorians, Protestant Nestorians, Assyrian Christians, and the like, even if they present letters from their highest ecclesiastical authorities.

Assyrian devotion to English Church. Their desire for protection not unreasonable.

That the Assyrians really desire our religious aid I see no reason for doubting; their devotion to the See of Canterbury is such that they seem to be confident that the appearance of "Archbishop's men" will be the signal for the cure of all their ills. They trust us because they are persuaded that our desire is not to make them Anglicans, or to create schisms amongst them, and form fresh religious communities, as is the aim of the Roman Catholics and the Presbyterians; but only to aid the existing Church, not to destroy, but to build up. Besides this desire for religious aid the hope of temporal succour and protection enters largely into their calculations. We cannot interfere with the rule under which they live, but the clergy that are sent out to minister to their spiritual necessities should at least be able to extend towards the Old Assyrians *the same protection as is afforded to their converts by the French and American Missionaries*, and this much I think they have a right to expect. At present the temptation to leave their old religion for the sake of temporal advantages is cruelly great. Of course we must take care that the Church we protect shall be a home of true teaching to them, otherwise they might as well be encouraged to leave it.

Work of the Latins and Presbyterians.

And here I must briefly do justice to the work of the Latins and the Presbyterians. Both have done much for the Assyrian nation; the former by cleansing a large body of the native Christians from all taint of Nestorian heresy, and by giving their clergy a sensible theological education; the latter by the printing of the Sacred Scriptures in the ancient and modern tongues, the excellent secular instruction they have afforded to a large number of the natives, and the

philanthropic works in which they have been engaged, such as an hospital and a small school of medicine.*

Needs of the Assyrian Church.

The two immediately pressing necessities of the Assyrian Church are:—

1. Education for the clergy.
2. Printed books, especially liturgies and service-books.

The Assyrians are quite powerless to help themselves in these matters; and without our assistance, as far as one can see, the Church must utterly collapse within one or two generations. Their clergy are without education of any sort, and they have not enough books for the services of the Church, all the existing ones being in manuscript, and only two or three copyists being left.

3. Recommendations.

Two Mission stations.

I now venture at his Grace's request to base upon the above Report certain recommendations. I should suggest the establishment of two Mission stations, one at Urmi, the other in Kurdistan, either at Kochanes or in the plain of Gavar. At one of these the printing-press might be worked (probably Urmi would be the best for this), at the other a Seminary or Theological College should be established.

This college should be under the immediate direction of the English clergy, assisted by native teachers, of whom there are at least three amongst the Old Assyrians who are already sufficiently capable. It seems advisable that the fund at the disposal of the Mission for educational purposes should be concentrated on this object.

Scheme for a Seminary.

The idea I submitted to the Patriarch, the Mattran, the Rabban Johnan, and other chief persons, ecclesiastical and lay, and which was approved of by them, was the following:—That the students be educated[1] between the ages of fourteen and eighteen, the latter being the usual age for the ordering of deacons.[2] That they reside nine months at the college, and have for their vacation the three winter months, during which the senior students be required to give instruction to the children in their native villages, those being the only months when they can attend school. If this scheme were to be found practicable, we should be maintaining more village schools than at present, and, with hardly any cost beyond the college expenses, the children would get better instruction, and the students would be obtaining experience in one branch of pastoral work before they left the college.†

Cost of Seminary.

It is difficult to speak as to the cost of such a college. A house to contain thirty boarders with lecture rooms and accommodation for two

[1] They would have learnt already at least to read and write.

[2] Thirty is the age for the ordination of priests.

* *A closer acquaintance with the work of the American Presbyterians disposes me to take a less favourable view of the worth of the secular education given in their schools. I do not think they understand the Oriental character, and they seem to spoil it by education of too Western a type.*

† *This plan of making the senior students teach in village schools has been adopted by the Mission* (1887) *and seems to work well.*

English priests would probably cost not less than £200 at Kochanes. The people will give the land and what materials and labour they can. At Urmi there is already a suitable house of which I shall speak below. The average annual cost per head of boarding, lodging, and, in some cases, clothing the students would most likely be about £15, but the most different sums were mentioned to me[1]; the Latins (as I before stated[2]) give £28 as the average at their seminary at Chosrova; this includes clothing and the maintenance of large buildings, things being done on a liberal scale.

Supposing such a college to be founded, in four or five years time we should have thirty little centres of spiritual enlightenment and orthodox teaching distributed throughout Kurdistan, in eight or ten years, fifty or sixty, and so on. Advantages Seminary.

This is only submitted as a rough scheme; in practice probably many alterations would have to be made.

All the old books should be printed in the two languages, Ancient and Modern Syriac. Liturgies and service-books are necessary immediately. The people would value their old theological works infinitely more than any new Western ones; we might choose for printing such as were either free from Nestorian taint, or such as required the fewest possible omissions. And here it is the place to say that I do not think there will be found any serious difficulties in the way of gradually putting the Assyrians in the path of orthodoxy, provided that the Missionary clergy exercise judgment. Printing.

Education and printing are the two works to be taken in hand at once. A national synod, to be convoked under the influence of our clergy, for the reformation of abuses which have mostly crept in during the last three hundred years, is a great work to be kept in view, but not immediately pressed. Synod.

Less than three English priests would make no impression whatever on the work. Five would, I think, be ample for all purposes,[3] but three are sufficient for the present. They ought to be unmarried, because although European women and children could live comfortably in the plain of Urmi, none ought to be taken into such a country as Kurdistan proper, and Mrs. Wahl deserves the highest credit for having cheerfully submitted to great privations during the last four years in order to be with her husband. Again, if the clergy are married, each must have a separate establishment. Europeans are bound to keep up a certain position in Persia, and thus the expense of their maintenance would be full three times more than if they all lived together in the Mission station.* Number of Missionaries required.

They ought to have a common purse and control of the expenditure.

One important matter is that they should be empowered to act on their own responsibility, without having always to wait for orders

[1] The natives put it much lower—£5 or £6.

[2] In letter containing narrative of journey. See p. 5.

[3] A medical man would be of great use.

**Mr. Wahl was withdrawn in* 1885. *The Rev. Canon Maclean, M.A., and the Rev. W. H. Browne, LL.M., took up the work in* 1886, *and have since been joined by the Rev. A. H. Lang, M.A.* (*in* 1887), *and the Rev. A. R. Edington, M.A.* (*in* 1888). *The two former are graduates of Cambridge, the two latter of Oxford.*

from home. Occasions must constantly arise when it will be necessary for the Mission to determine upon a course of action without delay, and it takes at least two months in summer and four in winter for an exchange of letters between Gavar and London.

Head of the Mission; Missionary qualifications.

This makes it all the more important to have a good priest at the head of the Mission. He must be a thoroughly capable man with great tact, a theologian and a gentleman, and he must be able to steer the ship of the Mission through many temporal difficulties, and to hold his own in case of necessity, against that most astute of all diplomatists, a polished Oriental.

Again, the Old Assyrians look upon the Latins and the Presbyterians as their two great enemies. The head of our Mission must be a man who is quite sure of his ground, with all his theological lines clear and distinct, and whilst he maintains unswerving fidelity to the decrees of the Universal Church, he must not give colour to the suspicion that he is a Papist or a Presbyterian in disguise.[1] The interference of Westerns with any of the old Eastern Churches is always a delicate matter, and requires the greatest caution. And as regards the two Missionary organisations at present established there is no reason why our Mission should not be on friendly terms with both; in fact it would be most unfortunate if the Europeans in Persia should quarrel amongst themselves: putting aside the religious question altogether, one cannot help being thankful for all philanthropic work undertaken by good and zealous men in such a country.

Further details, applicable to all the missionaries

To descend to smaller matters. Total abstinence having been insisted upon as a condition of communion by the Americans, and having become the distinguishing mark of Presbyterianism, a Teetotal Missionary would run the risk of arousing the prejudices of the people. On the other hand, the strongest survival of old customs amidst the general decay of the Assyrian Church is that of fasting, about which all from the highest to the lowest are most strict; and the clergy that are sent out must be careful as to their conduct in this matter. I need hardly say that they must be endowed with the real Missionary spirit, with the same disinterested zeal and care for the glory of God and the good of His Church which animated the Apostle of England and his little band, for they will have just the same work as St. Austin had to do.

Annual income required.

I cannot speak with any accuracy on the annual income required for the Mission, but I should think that after we have procured the necessary buildings, £1,000 to £1,500 a year would be sufficient.*

Firmans.

One more general recommendation I have to make, and an important one; that proper firmans for the Mission in Turkey and Persia be obtained, and the whole affair definitely arranged with the respective Governments, *before* any clergy are sent out from England.

1 "I pray thee that men leavened with the leaven of the Popes and the Americans be not mixed up with the foundation of this school."—Letter of the Mattran to Mr. Wahl (*Mission Field*, March, 1882).

**At the time I wrote this I had not travelled over the whole Chaldæan country, and had no idea of its extent or of the poverty and helplessness of the people. A much larger income is necessary to enable the Mission work to be carried on properly.*

If it be decided to establish this permanent Mission I should advise the following steps to be taken as early as possible. First steps to be taken.

1. Three priests to be sent out from England, one to remain at Urmi, the other two to proceed to Kochanes.[1]

2. There is a house at Urmi already in the occupation of Mr. Wahl. It is a large building of two storeys containing eight rooms, occupying the whole of one of the long sides of a courtyard measuring 133 ft. by 108 ft. Besides the house proper a row of offices occupies another side of this court, and the stables and a porter's lodge part of a third. There is also a smaller yard, and plenty of space for future addition to the building, if required at any time. In my opinion it is a suitable house for the purpose of a Mission station, and I recommend its acquirement. Its total cost inclusive of land and necessary repairs was £230, which Mr. Wahl has incurred on his own responsibility. It would require some further repairs and a few alterations.

3. Proper Syriac (Syro-Chaldaic) type to be sent out to Urmi, and the printing commenced without delay.

4. The opening of a temporary and experimental seminary at Kochanes.

Mr. Wahl was of opinion that a Mission station at Kochanes was unadvisable. I do not think the post ought to be abandoned without grave reasons. It is the centre of the Assyrian Church; at the present time the young Patriarch-designate is living there, and his spiritual and intellectual education is most important; the present Patriarch and all his family wish to have the college amongst them, and the Rabban Johnan, the best and most learned man in the whole Church, lives at Kochanes, and has promised to do his utmost in support of the scheme. Importance of Kochanes as a Mission station.

Supposing the two English priests to arrive at the beginning of May, something of this sort might be done. They might provide themselves with two large tents, take in ten pupils as an experiment, and commence their education with the help of the Rabban Johnan and an assistant (one that speaks English can be found), occupying themselves with the general direction of the course of studies, and the acquisition of the Syriac language. At the approach of winter the few students would be dismissed to their homes, the Missionaries would retire into one of the houses in the village, and early the following year could either commence building operations at Kochanes, or, if the experiment had not been satisfactory, move down to the plain of Gavar and open the college under the authority of the Mattran.* Experimental Seminary at Kochanes.

1 In summer a good rider could reach Urmi in two long days from Kochanes.

* *There are now* (1888) *four Mission stations: the central station at Urmi, one at Kochanes, one at Superghan, and another at Ardishai. Building has not yet been commenced at Kochanes, owing to difficulties with the Turkish Government.*

APPENDIX.

The following letters[1] were brought from the East by Mr. Riley, and delivered by him to the Archbishop of Canterbury on his return.

At the request of his Grace, the translations from the original Syriac have been made by the Dean of Canterbury.

They are numbered I., II., and III., and were written by the following persons:—

I. Mar Shimoon, the Patriarch and supreme Ruler of the Assyrian Church and nation.

II. The Mattran, or Metropolitan; hereditary Second Authority in the Church, whose duty it is to invest the Patriarch.

III. Rabban Johnan, or Rabbi Jonah, a learned anchorite, who dwells in a little room attached to the church at Kochanes.

I.

Reuben* Simeon by the grace of God Patriarch, Catholicos of the East, ruler of the ancient Church of the Chaldæans.

To his Grace Edward Archbishop of Canterbury and Metropolitan, and general (or universal) ruler of all England and all her possessions, complete in honour and glory, this is brought near with loving greetings.

The writing of your Grace on the 8th of the Western month of August, 1884, with joy was brought to our hands by the most excellent Athelstan Riley, your beloved son in our Lord and our honoured brother in Christ, student of Pembroke College in the city of Oxford; by meeting whom and seeing him and by his words we have found hope and confidence for the fulfilling of our requests which in our writings were brought before the blessed former Archbishop and also before your Grace. In which we described for your Grace the state of our ancient people, which was eminent and affluent in times past, and has come to this feebleness at the present time. And it seems to us that there is no help nor support from any other place whereby we might be strengthened; because they are our enemies except the pure and cleansed [reformed] Church of the Archbishop. And if your compassion neglects her as hitherto it has neglected her, she will be dispersed and perish among her enemies, and in a short time her name and memory will vanish for ever.

We have spoken by word of mouth with your honoured messenger about our requests and petitions, that we might have a school in Kochanes and another in Urumia, firstly for the instruction of presbyters who stand at the head and their instruction in the Canons; and then smaller schools for the villages. And also a printing press

[*See pp.* 8, 14, *and* 17.]

* *Or* "*Reuil.*"

to print Church books which are needed for holding services and the Sacraments. And it is clear that for these we require money and funds.

And that which ye have written that "they strongly desire help also from your people," this we did not believe to be possible. For since the departure of the honoured Dr. Cutts evil years have come upon us, and by many oppressions that have befallen us the wealth of the labourers has perished by robbery and theft and plunder, and our race is greatly impoverished until what we need even is not collected from the community. On this account our third request is that you would take care for the defence of our nation from those wrongs which in various ways are done to it by our enemies and especially to our soil and lands which are bought and sold by royal decree (wickedness?) to the Kurd chiefs and others.

For the purpose of confirming those things which we have described we beg that your Lordship will take care to choose and send zealous men full of the Holy Ghost, in whom your love shall be fervent in seeking for the rational sheep of Christ's flock, like the good and excellent Dr. Badger.

We believe that love and strength and zeal for the Church are found in you more than in those who rose up before you, and that you can rouse the mind of the council of your kingdom that they may do their duty in the matter of government; and likewise to incite and make zealous the spirit of the rich and noble and powerful of your famous and blessed Church of England, that she may open her hand to give goodly alms, which will be the means of uniting the four portions of the Chaldæan Church into one. After this the goodly Church of the Archbishop shall see that she has brought forth to herself a daughter youthful and pleasing in aspect and in brave deeds in the Eastern Church. Then shall be established a crown of victory and a great treasure in heaven for the Archbishop who cared for them, and for the Bishops and presbyters who laboured, and for their messengers who bore the burden and heat of the day, and for the rich and noble who put their money into an incorruptible treasury for ever and ever. Amen.

Given in our palace on the 7th day of the Eastern month of October in the year of Christ 1884.

From your true brother Reuben Simeon.

Seal

II.

Address. May this book [document] come to the hand of Edward, Archbishop, Metropolitan of London. Amen.

From Shamsdin of Kurdistan.

Mar Joseph Hananjesus, Metropolitan of the East; loving greetings and affectionate salutations are offered to thy Holiness, Rabbi of Rabbis and chief of the fathers, that is, to Archbishop Edward, Metropolitan of the blessed Church of England.

I rejoiced greatly when thy letter came unto me, and it was esteemed by me as a treasure full of spiritual blessings. And especially, cause of endless gratitude we have received from [of] thee, even I and all our people, Nestorians; because thou hast remembered us again and has sent to us that worthy messenger and evangelist of peace our beloved brother in Christ, Athelstan Riley, who was a comfort to us and dawned on us like brightness from the East to lighten the darkness of our hearts, gloomy with the darkness of tribulations and oppressions. And now behold, we receive him with much love, and showed him all our occupations and customs, and have commended to him all our requests, and he shall make known our petitions before thy Holiness, according as he has seen with his eyes and heard with his ears. For from the day that Mr. Cutts, the first messenger of your Lordship, came unto us, and I assembled our Church to meet him, and he gave us a helping hand, we have taken refuge in your powerful kingdom. And our friend Mr. Voel [Wahl] came and showed much zeal towards us, but was not helped according to his zeal. For he was much straitened and persecuted with us by those heathens because he was with us amongst those [*word unknown*] terrible lions who were thirsting for the blood of Christians. And they destroyed our church and trampled under foot its enclosure [or laura]. And we were thrown down and fell into the hand of our enemies, and would not have been able to arise if we had not been helped by your Lordship with great might and by the will of the Lord. As Mr. Riley also will inform thy Holiness about us. These suffice. Amen.

1884, *September* 24.

Mar Joseph.

Seal

This by my hand.

III.

Rabbi Jonah, a stranger, poor and needy, despoiled and oppressed, needing help from Christianity [Christendom], who is not worthy of the name and rank which by grace is given to him, even that of an Evangelic Deacon, unworthy either of name or of remembrance or of intercourse with the faithful, or of fellowship with the clerical assemblies of the sons of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Church which is in all the ends of the earth, and in the four quarters of creation; in which the discreet wisdom of God is revealed, the mystery which was hidden from worlds and ages in God, who created all, and it was declared by the knowledge of the adorable Persons of the sovereign Trinity. In which truly we take refuge, the exalted with the lowly, the nine

ranks of the heavenly churches and the nine degrees of our earthly church, which enclose within them in the gospel net by the preachers of the gospel, both Jews and Arameans, and the divided people who desire war. Peace which the archangel proclaimed to the Virgin of our race by Him who is God and man, perfect and complete in the quality of natures and persons of one Sonship, one Person; who by the Holy Spirit took flesh and became man, and the firstborn from the dead, and the Father of the adoption of sons for the world to come; who became the Mediator of the New Testament between God and man, and destroyed the hedge which stood in the midst, and the enmity, by the sacrifice of His human Body and the Blood of his fleshly Person, and came and preached peace to us that were far off and to them that were near. This very peace we give to all who accept our peace [or salutation], we Eastern Chaldæan Nestorians, although we are a reproach amongst the nations and an abomination accused amongst the peoples. We all, indeed, finally give peace [or greetings of peace] although we be not worthy, to the star shining in a gloomy night and to the one watchful shepherd and careful pilot and firm pillar, who is the great priest Edward, Metropolitan of England. Whose sealed letter came unto us in these days in which also our writing is penned, and it is sent by the hand of the desirable youth Athelstan Riley, apostle and messenger and a pleasant odour and acceptable sacrifice and pleasant before God and pleasant also to men. For such as he is we thirst, and such as he is we receive. If you remain towards us according to the promise that is between us we are content with this, we have no complaint at all against any one, if it shall be according to the law of your kingdom which deceives not. And now forthwith this indication is enough for thy wisdom. Farewell.

The Chaldæan October:
8th of it, 1884, of Christ.

Rabbi Jonah.

REPORT ON THE FOUNDATION OF THE ARCHBISHOP'S MISSION TO THE ASSYRIAN CHURCH IN 1886.

I. HISTORY OF THE ASSYRIAN CHURCH.

II. APPEAL OF THE ASSYRIANS TO THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, AND THE ANSWER.

Foundation.

THE Assyrian or Chaldean Church was founded, according to the ancient tradition, by two of the disciples of St. Thomas—Saints Addai and Mari of the Seventy (St. Luke x. 1)—in the first age of Christianity, St. Mari, or *Mar Mari*, as he is called in Assyria, being the first Bishop of Ctesiphon, an ancient city on the Tigris, not far from Babylon. The immediate successors of St. Mari in the primacy of the Church of the East were Abrees, Abraham (a kinsman of James, "the brother of God"), and thirdly, Yakoob, or James, who was also of the kindred of the Blessed Virgin. Up to the fifth century the Assyrian Church, or Church of the East, as it was called, was dependent on the Patriarchate of Antioch, the successors of St. Mari being designated by the title *Catholicos of the East*, and ranking next to the five great Patriarchs of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, according to a canon of the Council of Nicæa in 325. But in 431 Nestorius was condemned by the Council of Ephesus for his heretical opinions respecting the Incarnation of our Lord; the Church of the East espoused his cause, and was thereby cut off from communion with the Catholic Church. Soon after this the Catholicos of the East assumed the further title of Patriarch.

Nestorian heresy.

Several centuries elapsed before the visitation of God fell upon the Assyrian Church: her schools at Edessa, Bagdad, and Nisibis were noted for their learning, her divines for their subtle intellects, her missionaries for their zeal. Assyrian missions were planted amongst the Bactrians, the Huns, the Tartars, the Persians, the Indians, the Chinese, and in the eleventh century the Catholicos of the East ruled over twenty-five Archbishops, whose Metropolitical Sees stretched from Jerusalem to China. But in the fourteenth century the blow came: successive Mohammedan persecutions exterminated one by one the branches of the great community, and Tamerlane pursued the unfortunate Christians with such relentless fury that nothing was left of the once flourishing and powerful

Persecutions.

Communion but a remnant in the almost inaccessible fastnesses of the Kurdish mountains, whither the Catholicos fled for safety with the survivors of his flock.

Schism in the 16th century.

In the sixteenth century a schism arose in the Assyrian Church over the succession to the Catholicate or Patriarchate, and a third of the Assyrian nation followed an anti-Patriarch, who set up his residence at Mosul; the other two-thirds, composed of the dwellers in the mountains and in Persia, maintained their allegiance to the Shimoon Patriarch, the Assyrian Catholicate having been hereditary in that family since 1450. In 1778 the anti-Patriarch of Mosul submitted to Rome with all his flock, and thus arose the Chaldean Uniat Church, the Patriarch of Mosul taking the title of *Patriarch of Babylon*. But the old Church still remained isolated from all contact with the rest of Christendom, and it was not until the year 1843 that it opened formal communications with the Church of England through a letter indited by Mar Shimoon to the Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Howley).

First communications between the English Church and the Assyrians.

Much having been heard of the Assyrian or Chaldean Christians on the return of the Euphrates Expedition in 1837, the Royal Geographical Society and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge united to bear the expenses of an expedition to the Assyrian country, and thus Mr. W. F. Ainsworth effected an entrance into the Kurdish mountains in the year 1840.[1] This 1840.
expedition was followed by that of the Rev. George Percy Badger in 1842,[2] who was despatched by the Archbishop of Canterbury 1842.
(Dr. Howley) and the Bishop of London (Dr. Blomfield) to assist Mar Shimoon in the education and improvement of his people, and to open communications with Mar Elia, the head of the Papal Chaldeans, who was believed to be inclined to enter into amicable relations with the English Church. Dr. Badger remained in Assyria for a year at the cost of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, but, the former Society withdrawing from the work in 1843, Dr. 1843.
Badger was recalled. He had already commenced educational work amongst the Assyrians, and the epistle of Mar Shimoon, which will be found with the other letters at the end of this Report, shows with what feelings of dismay the Assyrians viewed his recall.[3] During the mission of Dr. Badger the great Kurdish insurrection, under Bedr Khan Beg, took place: thousands of Christians were put to the sword; and Mar Shimoon himself, flying from the infidels, obtained a shelter under Dr. Badger's roof at Mosul. The fact of the presence of an English priest as a counseller and protector during the greatest calamity that has befallen their nation in modern times may perhaps explain the devotion the Assyrians have ever since exhibited towards England and England's Church.

Being thus bitterly disappointed of English support, it was long before the Catholicos of the East again applied to our Primate; but

1 See Ainsworth's *Travels and Researches in Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, Chaldea and Armenia.* 2 vols. Parker. 1842.

2 See Badger's *Nestorians and their Rituals.* 2 vols. Masters. 1852.

3 See Appendix, p. 38.

1868. occasional appeals of a more or less private nature reached England between 1843 and 1868. In the latter year a formal petition, signed by three Bishops, five *Maleks*, or chiefs, thirty-two priests and eleven deacons, was forwarded to the Archbishop of
1876. Canterbury and the Bishop of London.[1] Moved by these persistent supplications, the two English Archbishops commissioned the Reverend E. L. Cutts to undertake a journey to Kurdistan in 1876 for the purpose of obtaining more definite information respecting the Assyrians and of the way in which help could be most usefully given to them. Dr. Cutts has published the account of his journey and the way in which he was received by Mar Shimoon and his flock in *Christians under the Crescent in Asia*.[2] The result of Dr. Cutts's report was the sending out of the Rev. Rudolph Wahl, an Austrian by birth, but in Anglican Orders (of the American
1881. Church) in 1881 by the late Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Tait).
1884. In 1884, serious difficulties having arisen with the Turkish and Persian authorities, I was commissioned by the present Archbishop of Canterbury to visit Assyria and Kurdistan in the autumn of that year and to draw up a report upon the state of the Mission and its future conduct.[3] It being found that Mr. Wahl was not a *persona grata* to the Assyrians, and that his nationality was an insuperable difficulty to obtaining for him the necessary protection,
1885. this clergyman was withdrawn in 1885.

Re-establishment of the English mission

Meanwhile great exertions were made by his Grace to re-establish the Assyrian Mission upon a permanent and satisfactory basis, it being felt that the honour of the Church of England was more or less at stake, and that the devotion of the Assyrians to the English Church after nearly half a century of disappointment, deserved an adequate response.

In the spring of 1885 the Reverend W. H. Browne, LL.M., one of the clergy of St. Columba's, Haggerston, volunteered for Assyria; and in the autumn of the same year, Canon Maclean, M.A., late Scholar of King's College, Cambridge, placed his services at the disposal of the Archbishop for five years, with the approval of his diocesan, the Lord Bishop of Argyll and the
1886. Isles. The spring of 1886 was spent in making due preparation for the establishment of the permanent Mission and in correspondence with the Patriarch of Antioch that all might be done in accordance with the order of the Church.[4] Everything having been satisfactorily arranged, a farewell service was held in Lambeth Palace Chapel at 8.30 A.M., on Wednesday, June 2nd, the Archbishop of Canterbury celebrating the Holy Eucharist, assisted by his domestic chaplain, the Rev. Montague Fowler, Canon Maclean and Mr. Browne ministering as Gospeller and Epistler. His Grace delivered an address, and afterwards gave

[1] See Appendix, p. 40. [2] 1 vol. Published by S.P.C.K.

[3] See *Narrative of a Visit to the Assyrian Christians in Kurdistan*, published at the office of the Assyrian Christians Committee, 2, Dean's Yard, Westminster.

[4] See Appendix, pages 41—45.

the Holy Communion to those who were present. The two Mission priests then received a special benediction at the hands of the Primate, and a few hours later the Assyrian Mission started for the East. His Grace having commissioned me to conduct the Mission to Assyria, to introduce the clergy to the Patriarch and Bishops, and as far as possible to arrange matters satisfactorily with the Turkish and Persian authorities, I left England shortly after the clergy, who went by way of Constantinople, and joined them at Tiflis. Some delay was caused by the unwillingness of the Russian Government to allow the Mission to pass through Russian territory, but, this difficulty being overcome, we at length arrived at Urmi on August 9th. Ten miles from Urmi we were met by Mar Goriel, the Bishop of Urmi, at the head of about two hundred of his people, clergy and laity, and so escorted to the town. The Sunday following, the Holy Eucharist, according to the English rite, was celebrated in the Assyrian Cathedral of St. Mary, in the presence of the Bishop and an overflowing congregation, when Canon Maclean briefly addressed the people, through an interpreter, setting forth the object and aim of the Mission and how the work would be conducted with the approbation of Mar Shimoon and his Bishops, at whose earnest entreaty it was commenced.

From Urmi we crossed into Turkey, entering the mountains of Kurdistan from the Plain of Gavar, shaping our course for Kochanes, the Patriarch's village. At Shaoútah, a village six hours' journey from Kochanes, we met the Patriarch, Mar Shimoon, Catholicos of the East, and I presented to his Holiness the Mission priests with the letter of our Primate.[1] We travelled together to the Patriarchal seat, and when we had arrived within an hour's ride of that place were met by the Rabban Johnan, the Hermit of Kochanes. I had made the acquaintance of this remarkable man in 1884. The last of the theologians of "the Church of the East," the last of her monastic order, a man whose reputation for saintliness and learning had spread far beyond the limits of his own Church,[2] and whose influence was co-extensive with the Assyrian nation, he had left his retreat in the valley of Tyari, in the year 1883, and had taken up his residence in a little cell attached to the church at Kochanes in the forlorn hope of being able to save the Assyrian Church from the destruction which seemed inevitable. Here he employed his time in training Mar Auraham, the young Patriarch-designate, teaching the children of the village, and copying the old Assyrian MSS. I had much conversation with him in 1884, and he had entreated for help from England. "I am old and alone," said he; "what can I do?" and he had promised to use all his influence on behalf of our Mission if this assistance should be sent to the Assyrian Church.

His joy at the sight of my return with the long-expected English priests can be imagined, he absolutely fell upon our necks and kissed us, and then taking his staff preceded us to Kochanes. The old man cherished the idea of going himself to Urmi to see

[1] See Appendix, page 45. [2] He was invited to the last Vatican Council.

the opening of the college, but it had been otherwise decreed. One day, about three weeks after the arrival of the Mission at Kochanes, he went down to bathe for his health in a sulphur spring at some distance from the village, and never returned alive; it was supposed he had been taken with a fit whilst in the water. The English priests were almost the last persons he ever spoke to on earth, and they followed him to his grave, when, amidst the tears of the Assyrians, he was laid to rest in the little cemetery of Kochanes. Truly a wonderful *Nunc dimittis!* "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation."

The Patriarch summoned the Mattran, or Metropolitan, Mar Isaac, to Kochanes to assist at the deliberations on the manner in which the work of the regeneration of the Assyrian Church should be begun. The Persian Bishops also came for the same purpose. The college and school, opened at Urmi this winter, are the outcome of their deliberations.

My journeys through the Assyrian country. 1. To Van.

Leaving the clergy at Kochanes, where they stayed six weeks to study the language, I undertook two journeys, one a comparatively short one, to Van—through a little known country, not of any particular interest from an Assyrian point of view. At Van Mr. Barnham, the English Consul, resides. Unfortunately he was absent at the time of my visit. The Russian Consul, M. Kolubakine, received me with extreme courtesy, took much interest in hearing about the Mission, and recommended that the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople should be supplied with all the facts relating to it, that he might understand that the objects were purely religious, as otherwise political complications might ensue.

2. To Mosul and back to Persia.

After the arrival of the Mattran, and before the death of the Rabban Johnan, I undertook my second and longer journey, following the course of the Zab through the Tyari country to Amadia, and thence to Mosul, starting from Kochanes on September 4th. At Amadia Mar Shimoon's country ends, the Assyrians south of this Kurdish town belonging to the Mosul Patriarchate, now united with Rome (see page 23). The line is not exactly drawn, and in the valley of the Supna there are still eight old Assyrian villages, which Kasha Auraham, a learned priest of the old Church, has, with difficulty, kept loyal to Mar Shimoon. The Dominican missionaries extend considerable protection to the Roman Assyrian villages, and thus the temptation to join the Roman communion is very great. (Concerning this see *Narrative of a Visit to Kurdistan in* 1884, p. 13.) The Americans also have sent agents from Urmi to endeavour to found Presbyterian schools in this valley, but hitherto unsuccessfully. From Amadia I proceeded *via* Daoudia, Bebozi, and Sheikh Adi to the Plain of Mosul. I visited the ancient Assyrian monastery of Rabban Hormuzd, now Roman, and so reached Mosul. Here a surprise awaited me. Instead of the whole Mosul Patriarchate united with Rome I found a separate Assyrian communion of considerable size that had abjured

the Roman obedience in 1873, and had since remained as an isolated Catholic communion, under the supervision of the Mattran Mar Elia Melus, a prelate of learning, and, by all accounts, of piety and honour. Out of the six Assyrian or Chaldean churches in Mosul (which all belonged to Rome before 1873) four are the property of this independent Catholic Chaldean Church. Many of the chief families of Mosul have thrown in their lot with this Church, notably that of Rassam, well known in connection with the Layard exploration, and now represented by Mr. Nimrod Rassam. The great village of Telkief, near Mosul, containing one thousand houses, is chiefly non-Roman, and the Church is in the hands of the independent Chaldeans. In the other villages round Mosul the churches are in the hands of the Romans, and the inhabitants, owing to pressure, have outwardly conformed. Two monasteries, Mar Elia and Mar Michael, have renounced the Roman obedience, and twelve priests in Mosul are under the jurisdiction of Mar Elia Melus. A printing-press (with firman) is attached to one of the churches. A Bishop, Mar Audishoo, is under Mar Elia in charge of a similar separated Catholic Chaldean Church at Malabar in India. Catholic Assyrian Church.

From Mosul I returned to Amadia, and then striking in a N.E. direction crossed the Zab and passed through the Assyrian valleys of Tyari, Tchooma, Baz, and Jeelu. I usually stayed in the houses of the *Maleks* or chiefs of the Assyrian tribes. At Jeelu I remained two days, at the request of Mar Sergis, the Bishop, who wished me to be present at the festival of the Exaltation of the Cross, a day kept with great solemnity by all Eastern Christians. Finally, I emerged from the mountains at the Plain of Gavar, and then crossed the frontier into Persia, reaching Urmi on Michaelmas Eve. The Mission priests had already returned from Kochanes, and were busy furnishing the mission-house, and laying in stores of every kind for the winter. I left Urmi ten days later, on October 12th, after paying a farewell visit to Prince Jansis Mirza, the Governor, and travelling *via* Tiflis and the Caucasus, reached London on All Saints' Day.

THE COUNTRY OF THE ASSYRIANS.

The Assyrians live partly in Turkey, partly in Persia. The map at the end of this Report shows their position, between Lake Urmi, Lake Van, and the River Tigris. Their numbers are probably about 100,000. By far the larger part of the nation inhabits Turkey; here, too, are the Patriarch, the Mattran, and all the Bishops except two, Mar Goriel and Mar Johnan. Their country in Persia is flat, comprising the Plain of Urmi and the Plain of Salmas to the north of the Plain of Urmi and separated from it by a ridge of hills, which stretches from the Turkish frontier to the Lake of Urmi. These plains are extremely fertile and carefully cultivated. The owners of the soil are chiefly Mohammedans. The Persia.

two towns are Urmi and Dilman, the latter in the plain of Salmas. The population is Persian, Assyrian, Kurdish and Armenian. The present Governor is Prince Jansis Mirza, a relative of the Shah. The relations of the Mission with the Persian authorities have been, up to the present time, most satisfactory; and much courtesy has been shown towards the Mission priests by the Prince.

Turkey.

The Assyrian country on the Turkish side of the frontier is totally different from that on the Persian. Its chief features are bold and grand mountain ranges, separated by deep and narrow valleys—the fortresses, so to speak, in which the Assyrians have been enabled to preserve the Christian faith amidst the dominant Mohammedan races. There is one valley of considerable size, a small plain, indeed, in the mountains, called Gavar; but, with this exception, the mountain ranges extend to the plain of Mosul, where they suddenly cease at a day's march from that town. The river Zab flows through the heart of the Assyrian country and falls into the Tigris below Mosul. Until 1844 the Assyrian mountains were under the rule of various Kurdish Beys, but in that year the Porte succeeded in establishing its sway over the country, and that part is now known as the *vilayet* of Hakkiari, under a governor (Fikri Pasha, a Kurd) responsible directly to the Minister of the Interior. The majority of the population is Kurdish, the Assyrians come next in point of numbers, the remainder being made up of Yezeedees or devil-worshippers, Armenians, and a few Jews. There are also some Turkish officials, but the Porte usually employs Kurds in the government of this province. The Kurds (a Mohammedan race) are the natural enemies of the Assyrians, and live side by side with them. Struggles are almost constantly going on between them, frequently producing actual conflicts. A grave question has recently arisen respecting the appropriation of Christian villages by the Kurdish chiefs, and the consequent eviction of the unfortunate villagers, their churches being turned into mosques.

Ashireths, or tribal Assyrians

The Assyrians of Turkey are divided into two classes, the *Ashireths* or tribal Assyrians, and the *Rayahs* or non-tribal. The former inhabit the valleys of Tyari, Tchooma, Baz, Jeelu, Diz Walto, and Etal; they are under *Maleks*, or chiefs, and rarely leave their valleys, where they live undisturbed by the Mussulmans, though their flocks are frequently carried off by freebooters, as the valleys, from their extreme ruggedness, do not afford sufficient pasture, and the Assyrians have to feed their flocks outside their natural fortifications. These tribal Assyrians are wild and savage; schools are practically unknown amongst them; their priests and deacons are frequently incapable of reading or writing, and are generally ignorant of the rudiments of the Christian faith. Even the Bishops are better judges of a rifle than of a doctrine. Preaching is absolutely neglected, and the holy mysteries, though validly celebrated according to the ancient rites, have become almost meaningless, both to the priest who officiates, and the people who assist at them.

The *Rayahs* or non-tribal Assyrians are in a pitiable condition. Their villages are generally the property of Kurdish chiefs, and they themselves little better than slaves. They are taxed up to starvation point; their houses are hardly fit for human habitation; men, women, and children go about scarcely covered from the winter's cold by a few rags: and yet apostacy from Christianity, which would bring them instantaneous relief from their sufferings, is almost unknown. I know no more touching sight than the interior of one of their poor churches; the old priest, clad in a vestment of the meanest material, repeating hesitatingly the prayers that have come down from the cradle of Christianity, the poor villagers pressing forward to kiss a little common wooden cross, the emblem of our holy faith, the monotonous chanting of the congregation conducted in low murmurs as if they were afraid of being heard outside—a scene almost without a parallel since the days of the catacombs.

Rayahs, or non-tribal Assyrians.

TEACHING OF THE ASSYRIAN CHURCH.

The Assyrian or Chaldean Church accepts the first two Œcumenical Councils of the Christian Church, and, as has been before stated, was cut off from the communion of the Catholic Church in the fifth century after Christ for rejecting the Third Council, held at Ephesus, which condemned Nestorius and his opinions. The ancient theological treatises of the Chaldeans are undoubtedly tainted with heresy, and although they are now too ignorant to hold Nestorian doctrines intelligently, still ignorance will not purge heresy, and as a Church they refuse to this day to employ orthodox language, by rejecting the title "Theotocos" or "Mother of God," and by using the expression "Two Persons" in speaking of the Incarnate Son of God. This loose language leads to all sorts of curious opinions (amongst individuals) respecting the Incarnation. The best instructed amongst the clergy are the most orthodox—a very hopeful sign. Indeed, from what the Mission has already seen of the Assyrian Church, the opinion advanced in 1884 has been rather strengthened than weakened that there will not be much difficulty in removing the hindrances to Catholic communion.[1]

The Assyrians are behind no Christians in their veneration for the Holy Scriptures; their canon, however, seems to have been never thoroughly determined, and some of the Epistles together with the Apocalypse are rarely to be met with in MSS.

A veneration for the "Sign of the Life-giving Cross," and for the Lord's Day, and a strict observance of the Christian fasts are conspicuous features of their religious life.

They have three Liturgies of high antiquity, or, to speak more accurately, one Liturgy with three variable portions. They count seven Sacraments or Sacramental Mysteries, their enumeration being somewhat different from that of any other Christian

[1] There is at present no communion between ourselves and the Assyrians.

Church, but the two great Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist are of course among the number. They have maintained to this day the Apostolic Ministry of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons; the Bishops must be celibates. The great abuse of an hereditary episcopate obtains amongst them; the unfortunate temporal position of the people was probably the origin of the custom, which took its rise about three hundred years ago. For further information the reader is referred to *Christians under the Crescent in Asia.*

PRESENT ASSYRIAN EPISCOPATE.

The following is a list of the Assyrian Bishops :—

The Patriarch, Mar Shimoon, Catholicos, of the East, resides at Kochanes.

Mar Isaac, Mattran or Metropolitan of the East, resides at Shamsdin.

Mar Johannan of Shamsdin.

Mar Sor-Ishu of Gavar.

Mar Sergis of Jeelu.

Mar Ishu of Duri, } near Amadia.
Mar Johnan of Okri, }

Mar Shimoon, } of Artel.
Mar Tuma, }

Mar Auraham, Patriarch-designate, first cousin to the Patriarch. He lives at Kochanes.

All the above are in Turkish Kurdistan. On the Persian side of the frontier there are in the plain of Urmi :—

Mar Goriel of Urmi.

Mar Johnan of Superghan.

Mar Johannan of Gavilan, now in England and insane.

Besides these prelates, I believe Mar Sleeva of Gavar is still alive in Russia, whither he fled from persecution.

CHARACTER OF THE ASSYRIANS.

The miserable condition to which the Chaldeans have been reduced during the last five hundred years has had a powerful effect upon the national character. Whilst they exhibit a passionate devotion to Christianity, and will endure to the death rather than deny Christ, but little spiritual life exists amongst them. Still they will probably compare favourably with any body of Western Christians in morals, with the exception of certain special defects, of which the most prominent are jealousy of each other and quarrelsomeness—universal faults amongst Eastern Christians, and those which have enabled the Mussulmans to keep them so easily in subjection. Untruthfulness and avarice are also national failings, resulting from the unfortunate position of these poor people. To proceed on a begging tour to England or America is

the highest ambition of an Assyrian; for many have returned to their native land to pass their days in comparative wealth owing to the misplaced zeal of honest and charitable people in England, who are no match for the subtle Oriental. The appeal is usually on behalf of a school; in rare cases there is some establishment of this kind in existence, and if the applicant be more than ordinarily honest he may spend a third or even half of the sum he has raised in England on his school when he returns. *Any* Oriental begging for religious purposes should be suspected, but no support without the most careful inquiry should be given to persons calling themselves Nestorians, Persian Christians, Reformed Nestorians, Protestant Nestorians, Assyrian Christians, and the like, even if they present letters from their highest ecclesiastical authorities.[1]

The Archbishop's Mission especially desires to warn the charitable against giving money to Assyrians claiming to be its agents. *No native has any authority to beg on its behalf, and no money given to one will in any way benefit the work of the Mission.*

HISTORY OF THE RISE OF THE INDEPENDENT CATHOLIC CHALDEANS OF MOSUL.

I have already referred[2] to the independent Catholic Assyrian Church under Mar Elia Melus. The following is a brief account of the schism amongst the Chaldeans united with Rome. In 1869 a Papal bull was promulgated which over-rode the old Assyrian canons. This bull enacted as follows:—

(*a*) The Bishops, to the exclusion of priests and laity, to elect the Patriarch of Babylon.

(*b*) The Patriarch to be confirmed by the Pope.

(*c*) The Patriarch to personally visit Rome, give full reports on ecclesiastical questions, and obey strictly the Papal orders.

(*d*) Every Bishop to be nominated by the Synod of Bishops and three names to be sent to Rome, the Pope to choose one of the three, or, if he see fit, another person not nominated.

These provisions ran counter to the old canons, which provided that the Patriarch should be elected by the Bishops, and subsequently approved by priests and laity. Bishops to be appointed in the same manner.

[1] The waste of money caused by the lavish support given to Assyrian beggars in England and America is perfectly lamentable. I can neither speak too strongly about this nor insist too earnestly that by such action well-meaning people are degrading instead of elevating the national character of the Assyrians. There are now three distinct Missions in and about Urmi (Oroomiah), whence these religious beggars generally come—the Anglican, the Roman, and the Presbyterian—surely sufficient choice for most people and enough to prevent the giving of money to native Christians, who are never to be trusted. The mixture of honesty and dishonesty in the Chaldean character—a combination entirely strange to the English mind—is calculated to deceive even the most astute, and I can only say that of all the Assyrians or Nestorians who have visited England during the last few years I cannot call to mind one whose word I would believe when his interests were concerned, or to whom I would entrust with confidence the smallest sum of money.

[2] Page 27.

In 1873 the secession began by the Patriarch Ysuff consecrating some Bishops contrary to the terms of the bull. The Chaldean clergy had already been much shaken in their allegiance to Rome by the declaration of the Infallibility. The Patriarch, a very old man, was forced to submit before his death, but three Bishops still stood out. Finally, two of them were reduced to submission, but the Mattran Mar Elia Melus remained and still remains firm. The old Patriarch died, and a new one (Elia) was consecrated according to the terms of the bull in 1878.

I had several conversations with Mar Elia Melus.[1] He told me that his hope was for a reunion with Mar Shimoon's Church on a Catholic basis, the obstacles to immediate reunion being the Nestorianism of the mountain Church, a matter about which there could be no compromise, and the ignorance and low state of the Bishops and clergy under Mar Shimoon's obedience. He expressed the warmest sympathy with our work as tending to remove these obstacles, promised us all the assistance in his power; and, with respect to the needs of his own flock, said that the presence of a priest of the English Church in Mosul would help to strengthen his position, oppressed as his people are by the feeling of isolation, and would also assist the work of re-organising the educational system, which, since the separation from Rome, appears to have fallen into some disorder.

To conclude I would point out: (*A*) That this Church holds the same position as the Old Catholic Church of Europe, with this difference, that its position seems unassailable from the strictest ecclesiastical standpoint, the Roman Church having no shadow of a title to jurisdiction in Assyria; and (*B*) That in this Assyrian Church, similar in all respects save one, Nestorianism, to the Old Assyrian Church, with which we are more immediately concerned, we may have found, by God's blessing, just the leaven we require to purify the old Church from all taint of false doctrine respecting our Lord's Incarnation, and that this discovery may be of the highest importance to the work of our Mission.

WESTERN MISSIONS AT WORK AMONGST THE ASSYRIANS.

Persia.

Two Missions have been at work for some time in the Persian part of the Assyrian country, the Latin Mission of the French Lazarists, and the Presbyterian Mission from America.

a. French Mission.

The Latin Mission dates from the last forty years. It has two stations, one at Urmi, where the French Bishop *in partibus* resides; and another at Chosrova, in the Plain of Salmas, to which is attached the ecclesiastical seminary. There are about seven French clergymen, besides the Bishop, at work in this country;

1 The Bishop was a friend of the late Monseigneur Darboy, Archbishop of Paris, and other prelates of the Anti-Infalliblist party at the Vatican Council.

there is also an establishment of the Sisters of St. Vincent de Paul. The strongest centre of the Roman Catholics is the Plain of Salmas, where nearly all the Assyrians are united with Rome. The native Bishop lives at Chosrova; he is under the obedience of the Patriarch of Babylon at Mosul.

b. American Mission.

The Presbyterian Mission from America has existed over fifty years. Its headquarters are at Urmi, with five or six ministers, a physician, and several Mission women. The American colony is numerous, as nearly all the members of it are married and live in separate houses with their families. The efforts of the Missionaries have resulted in the establishment of a native Presbyterian community, with chapels, schools, and congregations scattered all over the Plain of Urmi. Just outside the town the Americans have erected some fine buildings. Here are their hospital and seminary. The Presbyterian Mission has large funds at its disposal, and all its enterprises are carried on regardless of cost and in the most liberal way.

Turkey.

In Turkey there is a Dominican establishment at Mosul, with stations as far north as Amadia. Practically the whole of the plain country between Mosul and the northern mountains is under the control of the Roman Catholics. Their position with the Turkish Government is a very strong one, and as the whole of the anti-patriarchate of Mosul submitted to Rome in 1778, the work of the Dominicans has been to build up the Uniat Chaldean Church rather than to engage in direct missionary enterprise. The schism of 1873 and the rise of the independent Catholic Chaldeans has somewhat altered the aspect of affairs in the Plain of Mosul. This movement has been already discussed.

At present there is no Protestant Mission at Mosul, but I believe the American Missionaries are thinking of attempting to maintain a station in that town.

On reference to the map it will be seen that none of these Missions have penetrated into the heart of the Assyrian country, where Mar Shimoon, Catholicos of the East, still reigns supreme. Both Roman Catholics and Presbyterians are working in the two plains of Persia and of Turkey, and although isolated attempts have been made from time to time to establish stations in the mountains, the loyalty of the Assyrians to Mar Shimoon has rendered them abortive.

It may be mentioned that the English clergy are upon terms of the most friendly social intercourse with the members of the French and American Missions at Urmi.

WORK OF THE ENGLISH MISSION DURING THE PRESENT WINTER 1886-7.

After consultation with Mar Shimoon and Mar Isaac the Mattran, the following scheme was arranged by the Mission priests:—

(*a*) A college for thirty priests and deacons.

(*b*) A school for twenty boys, those who will eventually take Holy Orders to be preferred.

Both these to be opened at the Mission-house at Urmi, this being the only building possessed as yet by the Mission.

(*c*) Printing, if possible, to be begun (service-books most needed).

Agreeably with these decisions the school was opened on St. Andrew's Day, and the college a few days later. Kasha [1] Oshana (Archdeacon of Persia), and a young Chaldean of the name of David (since ordained a deacon) were appointed as teachers under the English priests; the archdeacon is also the secretary of the Mission, being a pupil of the late Rabban Johnan, a considerable theologian, one of the most learned men in Assyria, and a great favourite with the Patriarch Mar Shimoon.

On account of the pressing applications for admission, the numbers were increased to thirty-five in the case of the college, and twenty-five in that of the school. Owing to difficulties on the Turkish frontier, many of the mountain clergy were unable to come to the college, and their places, therefore, were filled by Persian clergy; and the young patriarch-designate, Mar Auraham, who had been sent by the Patriarch to attend the lectures, had not arrived up to the time of the latest mail received from Urmi, but two of Mar Shimoon's cousins are at the college. Nearly all the students of the college sleep in the Mission-house, which is crowded to overflowing; the Bishop of Urmi has thrown open his house to some of the boys, others sleep at the houses of relatives; but the three or four little *nata kursis*, or Bishops-elect, aged from ten years upwards, who have been sent to the school, are lodged in the Mission-house so as to be under the more immediate care of the English clergy. The course of instruction comprises theology, (lectures given by the Mission priests), reading and writing in old and new Syriac, and lectures on the Liturgy (by the Archdeacon of Persia), arithmetic, English, Persian, geography, &c.

The printing, with the exception of a few pamphlets[2] struck off by the copying-presses given by Cuddesdon and Ely Theological

[1] *Aboona* = bishop, *kasha* or *kasheesha* = priest, *shamasha* = deacon, in the Syriac or Chaldean language. *Mar* = Lord, and is the ordinary title of a bishop. The same word, or its feminine form, *Mart*, is prefixed to the names of saints, as *Mar Michael*, *Mart Mariam*.

[2] The first pamphlet was the Nicene Creed (in its Oriental form), printed in Ancient and Modern Syriac.

Colleges, has not been commenced owing to pressure of work and lack of funds.

IMMEDIATE WORK CONTEMPLATED IN 1887.

As soon as the winter breaks up and travelling becomes possible, the college and school will disperse, the priests, deacons, and boys will go to their homes and devote themselves to their agricultural labours, and the Mission clergy will at once commence their journey to the mountains. The first work will be the establishment of some permanent station in Turkey. This is absolutely necessary for the protection of the Assyrians, and has indeed been made a condition by the Assyrian rulers. "I am willing to obey all the orders of the Archbishop of Canterbury," said the Mattran to me, "on *one* condition: that next spring your Mission returns to Turkey and never leaves us again."

This necessity, added to the fact that the Patriarch has placed the whole of the education of his people in the hands of the English clergy, has made it imperatively necessary that the staff of the Mission should be increased, and it is intended that two more clergy (two priests, or a priest and a deacon) shall proceed to Kurdistan this year. Next in importance to the Mission station in the mountains, is the question of the independent Catholic Chaldeans, and one of our priests will probably proceed to Mosul to conduct investigations, and to open communications with Mar Elia Melus.

It is hoped that the "Liturgy of the Holy Apostles" will be printed and published this year. This will be the first printed service-book of the Assyrian Church, all the existing ones being in manuscript.[1]

Towards the autumn the Mission priests will make preparations for recommencing the educational work on such an extended scale as funds permit.

CONCLUSION.

Two priests of the Anglican Church are now engaged in the regeneration of an ancient separated Oriental Church at the request of the Patriarch and Bishops of that Church: they are working under the authority of a Western Primate, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and with the license and approval of one of the four chief Bishops of the Holy Eastern Church, or Catholic Church of the East, the Patriarch of Antioch. A strange Mission, unique not only in the annals of the English Church, but in the history of Christendom. A work of such exceeding difficulty and delicacy as to make the highest demand upon our faith in God's power and love. A little seed of peace and concord that by the

[1] Special type will have to be prepared for our liturgical printing, at the cost, probably, of about £60.

heavenly due of the Divine benediction may grow and bear such fruit as we dare not trust ourselves to contemplate.

The Mission priests receive no stipends; they have gone to their distant labours not for hire but for the love of Christ and His poor brethren. We cannot all go to Assyria, but we can all help these clergy by our prayers and by our alms, and thus win for ourselves a share in that beatitude which saith:

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."

February, 1887.

As this is passing through the press, the gratifying intelligence is published that the Rev. H. C. Ogle, Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, has offered himself for the work of the Mission, and will proceed to Assyria in August.

ASSYRIAN CHURCH FUND.

Dr. STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31ST, 1886. *Cr.*

RECEIPTS.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
To Balance in hand at S.P.G.	27	19	1			
Petty Cash	15	0	10			
Interest	0	3	8			
				43	3	7
Annual Subscriptions, including £500 from S.P.C.K.				670	8	6
Donations				503	14	0
Church Collections and Meetings				109	6	9
Sale of published Papers				7	10	6
				£1334	3	4

EXPENDITURE.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Printing				28	15	0
Stores, &c., for use in Assyria				155	6	5
Shipping charges				2	5	7
Rev. Canon Maclean—Expenses of outfit, journey, and personal				135	0	0
Rev. W. H. Browne—Expenses of outfit, journey, and personal				135	0	0
Paid to Imperial Ottoman Bank (to credit of Rev. Canon Maclean and Rev. W. H. Browne)				550	0	0
Paid to Bank of England (to credit of Rev. Canon Maclean and Rev. W. H. Browne)				200	0	0
Petty Cash expenses—	£	s.	d.			
Advertisements	6	7	0			
Meetings	1	12	6			
Stationery	0	18	8			
Travelling	1	13	0			
Sundries	1	10	6			
Postage	5	0	8½			
				17	2	4½
Balance in hand at S.P.G.	102	11	10			
Petty Cash	8	2	1½			
				110	13	11½
				£1334	3	4

R. MILBURN BLAKISTON, *Hon. Secretary.*

Examined with vouchers, and found correct.

March 10th, 1887. JOHN W. B. RIDDELL, *Auditor.*

APPENDIX.

Copies and translations of some of the letters that have passed between the See of Canterbury and Orthodox and Assyrian Bishops:—

I.

MAR SHIMOON *to the* ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY *and the* BISHOP OF LONDON.[1] (Written in Syriac.)

From Mar Shimoon, Patriarch of the Chaldeans, to his beloved brethren in the Lord, Mar William, Catholicos of all England, Mar James, Metropolitan of London, and all the worshipful Bishops,—may the Lord preserve them.

After the kiss of salutation we inform you, beloved brethren, that previous to this present epistle we sent you another to which we are now waiting an answer; may God grant the delay to be for the best. You are undoubtedly acquainted with the combination of misfortunes, calamities, and evils which we have suffered from the enemies of the Christian faith. These have massacred large numbers of our people, and carried into captivity very many of our women and children. They have burnt and destroyed our villages, our habitations, and our churches, and plundered us of all we possessed, so that the prophecy of Jeremiah has been fulfilled in us: My people have fallen into the hand of the enemy, and there was none to help them; the enemy saw them and laughed at their calamity. They pursued us in the mountains, and in the wilderness did they lay wait for us. Mine eyes are dimmed with tears, my bowels are troubled, my glory is poured out upon the earth for the destruction of my people; because the women, and children, and sucklings, have been sold as slaves in the towns and villages.[2] The heart of our adversaries, namely, the Romanists or Papists, rejoiced when they saw what had befallen us, because we would not give ear to their words when they would have turned us away from our old and righteous path.

But because that God is plenteous in compassion and merciful, and with the temptation maketh a way of escape, He so ordered it that the presbyter George Badger and his colleagues should be in these parts to gather together such as had escaped the edge of the sword, and to provide them with food and clothing. Indeed, had it not been for the presbyter just mentioned, and his exertions on our behalf, we know not what would have become of us, for after God he has been our supporter and help. May the Lord recompense you abundantly for having sent him unto us.

We are not as yet delivered out of our troubles and calamities, but have strong hope in the Lord that we shall soon be saved from all our afflictions through the medium of Sir Stratford Canning, who

[1] This letter, of 1844, is inserted to show the connection of the present Mission with that of Dr. Badger.

[2] Mar Shimoon here refers to the terrible massacres of Bedr Khan Beg.

is endued with godly zeal, a noble diligence, and sound policy on our behalf. May the Lord recompense him also for what he has already done for us; for undoubtedly had he not stood in the breach before us our enemies would have destroyed us utterly. The Lord God prolong his days, prosper his pious designs, and give him an incorruptible crown in His everlasting kingdom.

But now our calamity has increased, and the trouble of our heart has been doubled, since we heard that the brethren are thinking to recal the presbyter George Badger to your country,—a measure we never expected, nor did we ever anticipate such a thing from them, especially while it is our lot still to be beaten about by the waves of adversity, and knowing that you are a refuge even for strangers, how much more then for those who are of the household of faith. And now that we have found a little respite, must we lose the chief foundation of our support, and become a prey to our spiritual enemies who mock us for having placed our dependence, after God, upon our English brethren, and taunt us by saying: The English only laugh at you, nor can they give you any assistance, neither do they keep their promises? Moreover, I am certain it will be a source of deep regret to you, brethren, should you hear that so ancient a Church as ours, viz., the Chaldean Church, is destroyed or broken up into sects; and so much the more because you yourselves have tasted of the cup of divisions in your own country. And shall this also befal our Church after it has continued one for so long, even from ancient time?

Therefore, I entreat you, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you do not reject this our petition, seeing that it is not a great thing with you, that you should continue to us the presbyter George Badger to assist us, and because the whole is for the glory of God and for the welfare of men. Nor can I think that this is a hard matter to a nation holding the true faith, and which sends forth so many messengers among the people and brethren, so that in you is accomplished the saying of the Psalmist: "Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the end of the world." Is it not a small matter to such a nation to give up one person to those who are in so much need of his assistance? Moreover, God has said: "Call upon Me in the day of trouble and I will deliver thee." We are now in great trouble, and shall our brethren betake themselves far from us? This is contrary to our hope. I therefore entreat you, and not I only, but all my bishops, priests, and deacons, nay, all my people join with me in the same request, that you will continue the presbyter George Badger to us until our urgent necessity is removed.

Moreover, we would acquaint you that we have made arrangements, when it shall be the Lord's will to deliver us out of our troubles, to open schools for the instruction and education of our people, and to take many other measures for their benefit, such as rebuilding the churches which have been destroyed, and bringing together and establishing the numbers who have been scattered about in Persia, in the mountains, in the plains, and in the villages

and cities of the stranger; for great diligence is required to restore things to their former state, nay, but as we hope, even to a better condition.

And now, brethren, I commit this matter into your hands, and expect an answer from you, that you will leave with us the presbyter George Badger and his colleagues. This is our great hope; and may the Lord prolong your life, while we in parting repeat a second and a third time the kiss of brotherly salutation.

Written on Saturday, the first day of January, in the year of our Lord 1844, in the town of Mosul, in the house of the presbyter George Badger, by the hand of Kash' Auraha, the Archdeacon and servant of Mar Shimoon.

L. S.

II.

Extract from a letter written by Assyrian Bishops, Clergy *and* Laity *in* 1868 *to the* Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Tait) *and the* Bishop of London.

This petition to be delivered into the hands of the Reverend, Catholic, Orthodox, and Benevolent Fathers; the beloved and blessed and illustrious, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of the Metropolitan City of London, in peace and prosperity. Amen.

May it be honoured and graciously received by their saintly and pure hands!

To the most reverend and zealous Fathers, the elect of the Holy Ghost, set as watchmen over the rich pastures of the heavenly Lamb, the dispensers of spiritual streams to all who thirst after the truth, whose resplendent beams are diffused throughout the world, whose pure doctrine has watered the once barren lands, whose light, like that of the morning star, has shone upon the dark places of the earth, the comforters of the afflicted and sorrowing, the sun of the present generation, the meridian of our time, the holy ministers, elect primates, orthodox patriarchs, watchful shepherds, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Right Reverend the Bishop of London, who follow after the life of the Crucified One which leads to heaven, and who dwell in perfect peace and security within the dominions of her glorious Majesty, the most excellent Queen Victoria.

* * *

We implore the Lord Jesus Christ, and cast ourselves at your feet who are His disciples, beseeching you to compassionate the condition of our people, who are wandering over our mountains like sheep without a shepherd, and send us some of your missionaries and preachers to guide us in the way of life; for verily we have all

gone astray, each one following his own devices, through our utter lack of pastors, instructors, and counsellers. We are in the condition of fatherless and motherless orphans. We are persecuted and have cried aloud for help, but no one has come to comfort us. Woe unto us, for we have erred and are benighted! Therefore we beseech you, O Fathers, to save us from the all-devouring sea which surrounds us—deliver us from its overwhelming billows, and rescue us from the fierce storms which threaten our destruction.

Having thus set before you a summary of our melancholy condition, we earnestly trust that you will not fail to come to our assistance, and will not stand aloof from your disconsolate brethren, who are on the brink of ruin. The harvest truly is abundant, but we are destitute of a single labourer. Our hope in Christ is that He may implant sympathy in your hearts towards us, and move you to send spiritual labourers to us from your Church, which is endowed with riches and knowledge. For our hearts are pained and our sight is dimmed through bewailing the miseries of our Zion, tossed to and fro by the raging waves, and devastated by voracious wolves. But Thou, O Lord, who art eternal, and whose throne is everlasting, be not angry with us, neither cast us off for ever. We deserve Thy chastisements; nevertheless, in Thy manifold mercy, haste to deliver us.

Finally, we pray you, holy Fathers, to pardon the liberty which the undersigned—the suppliants of your spiritual aid—have taken in submitting the foregoing statement of their deplorable condition to your gracious consideration.

III.

The Archbishop of Canterbury *to the* Patriarch of Antioch.

Edward, by Divine Providence, Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of All England and Metropolitan, to our Brother dearly beloved in the Holy Spirit, Gerasimus by the mercy of God the most Blessed and Holy Patriarch of the Divine City Antioch, and of all the East, Father of Fathers, and Pastor of Pastors, Grace be with you and Peace from God.

We desire by this letter of ours, to express, in the first place, our pleasure at the tidings which have come to us of the recent elevation to the Apostolic throne of Antioch of a Pastor, the report of whose learning and piety has already reached our ears, and we invoke upon your Holiness and upon the flock committed to your charge the Blessing of the All Holy and Undivided Trinity, praying Him to make you in all respects a worthy successor of the Blessed Apostle Peter, and of our Father amongst the Saints, Ignatius the Martyr.

We now desire to make known to your Holiness that the Reverend Arthur John Maclean, of King's College, in the University of Cambridge, Master of Arts, Canon of the Cathedral Church of Cumbrae in Scotland, and the Reverend William Henry Browne of Saint John's College in the said University, Bachelor of Laws,

are sent by us to the Christians of Kurdistan and Persia, known by the various titles of Chaldæans, Assyrians and Nestorians, in answer to the repeated requests for spiritual aid and instruction made both to our revered predecessor in the See of Canterbury and to us, by the Patriarch, the Metropolitan, and by the chief persons Ecclesiastical and Lay that bear rule over this poor and oppressed body of Christian people.

Our object in sending out these two priests, of whose piety, learning and aptitude for the work entrusted to them we are well assured, is not to bring over these Christians to the Communion of the Church of England, nor to alter their ecclesiastical customs and traditions, nor to change any doctrines held by them which are not contrary to that Faith, which the Holy Spirit speaking through the Œcumenical Councils of the Undivided Church of Christ has taught as necessary to be believed by all Christians; but to encourage them in bettering their religious condition, and to strengthen an ancient Church, which through ignorance from within, and persecution from without cannot any longer stand alone, but without some assistance must eventually succumb, though unwillingly, to the external organisations at work in its midst.

Following our instructions, these two priests will open schools and a college for persons designated for the Ministry, and, if possible print and distribute amongst them such ancient service-books and theological works of their Church, as are in accordance with the Faith delivered to the Saints.

Now, therefore, seeing that these Chaldæan or Assyrian Christians anciently formed a part of that flock which your Holiness' predecessors were set by the Head of the Church to feed and guard, we, whilst answering to the cry of this afflicted people, "Come over and help us," desire that this work should receive the Benediction of your Holiness as well as our own, to which we would fain ask your Holiness to add with the prayers you offer before the Throne of Grace, a petition that these two pastors may be endued with the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and Ghostly Strength, and the Spirit of Knowledge, True Godliness and Holy Fear.

We conclude, expressing the sentiments of fraternal affection and esteem which we entertain towards your person and office, and praying that your reward may be in many souls gathered unto Christ.

And we remain always your faithful bedesman and brother in Christ our God. (Signed) EDW: CANTUAR:

L. S.

Given at our Palace at Lambeth, in London, and sealed with our Archiepiscopal seal this First day of February in the year of Our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighty-six.

IV.

The Patriarch of Antioch *to the* Archbishop of Canterbury.

(Translated from the original Greek.)

Gerasimus, by the mercy of God, Patriarch of the great Theopolis of Antioch and of all the East,—to Edward our brother greatly beloved and esteemed in Christ our God, by the mercy of God, Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of All England and Metropolitan, peace from God and brotherly greeting in Christ.

We were moved in our inmost heart and rejoiced in spirit when about the latter half of the month of April last, M. Joachim, the most holy Archbishop of Constantinople (New Rome), who is Œcumenical Patriarch, wrote and transmitted to us the fraternal letters which were despatched to us by your Reverend Holiness, and dated the first of the month of February last, wherein your honoured Highness addresses expressions of congratulation to us in joyfulness of soul and heart upon the proclamation of our Mediocrity, by the Divine grace and blessing, to the most holy Apostolic and Patriarchal throne of Peter, chief of the Apostles; and wherein you invoke the blessing and grace of the One Super-substantial and Undivided Godhead in Three Persons, both upon ourselves and the peculiar people of the Lord committed to us from above; and wherein at the same time you communicate to us in the spirit of brotherliness the fact that, moved by Godly wisdom and evangelic care, you sent to Kurdistan and Persia, remote countries (as ministers of God and fellow-workers in the Gospel of Christ), two Reverend Priests of the English Church (over which by the mercy of God you worthily preside), not for the purpose of making proselytes from among the Christians known there under different names, Chaldæans, Assyrians and Nestorians, but in order to support them and exhort them to be comforted concerning their faith amid much affliction and tribulation.

These things and the other manifold grace of the Spirit of the Gospel abounding in your fraternal Epistle, which clearly bear witness to a soul dear to God, both speaking and writing and filled with holy feelings of genuine and sincere brotherly love and divinely inspired zeal for the glory of the Church of Christ—all these things, we say, and above all the great regard of your Holiness for the venerable Orthodox Catholic Church of Christ amongst us, disposed us most favourably, and created a certain unspeakable affection towards you in our soul, and on this day prompts us joyfully in return to pay your Reverend Holiness a visit, but in an epistolary sense only, and to come to spiritual discourse with you, manifesting the fruit of the Spirit, love according to God.

Saluting in Christ your Holiness who is beloved of us, and returning to you the holy kiss of brotherly affection, we in the first place with our whole hearts accord our gratitude to your Highness,

beloved of Christ, in return for your expressions of congratulation and fervent prayers to Almighty God both for ourselves and our faithful flock which with fraternal disposition and goodwill you conveyed to us. In the next place we praise the good work you have done on behalf of the unjustly suffering Christians in Persia and Kurdistan, and we heartily bless the two distinguished Priests of the English Church who have undertaken this ministry, and we fervently pray our loving God and Saviour who prospereth and fulfilleth every good counsel according to His holy will, that He would enlighten them with the light of His Divine wisdom and knowledge, that he would arm them with the strong panoply of His All-Holy Spirit in order that, filled with knowledge, abounding in kindness, and able to admonish, they may comfort them in every affliction and necessity, and may confirm in the Faith the hearts of the unhappy Christians of those climes, whom the most Venerable Apostolic and Patriarchal See of the chief Apostle, the holy Theopolis of Antioch (where first was known the gracious name of Christians) which from ancient times bears rule as a diocese, and has ecclesiastical authority throughout the whole East, had formerly comprised in its fold elect of God.

Returning very many thanks to your Holiness, highly esteemed by us for the feelings of genuine and sincere love and brotherly regard which you manifest towards us, we assure you that we also cherish the same fraternal sentiments towards you, and that in our heart we bear a lively and fervent interest and affection towards the English Church, and that we offer earnest prayers to the Author and Finisher of our salvation, beseeching Him that He would strengthen the fraternal spirit prevailing in it towards the Orthodox Eastern Church, by which alone shall be possible a closer connection of these two Churches and their full and perfect union. The common Father of all and God the Saviour and His Spirit, who willeth that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, enlighten the mind and heart of all men with the unapproachable light of His Divine knowledge, and guide all men to the common worship and service of Himself in spirit and in truth, and make of all nations one peculiar people, believing and confessing one and the same confession the [faith] handed down by the inspired Apostles and godly Fathers, and the seven holy and venerable Œcumenical Synods, and preserved until now pure and unchanged in the spotless and uncorrupted Orthodox Church of Christ, and which shall be preserved till the fulness of the ages according to the unerring witness of the Divine Author and Finisher of it. Whose saving grace be ever with your Holiness, much esteemed by us, and with all the flock dear to God which is committed to your care. Meanwhile concluding our letter—

We remain (in Damascus, May 20th, 1886),
Of your Reverend Holiness, much esteemed by us, the Beloved Brother in Christ,
GERASIMUS OF ANTIOCH.

V.

The Archbishop of Canterbury *to the* Patriarch Mar Shimoon, Catholicos of the East.

Edward, by Divine Providence Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of All England, and Metropolitan, to our well-beloved brother in Christ, Mar Shimoon, Patriarch and Catholicos of the Eastern Regions, Supreme Ruler of the Ancient Church of the Chaldæans, health, grace, and blessing.

Nearly two years have now elapsed since the return of our well-beloved son in Christ, Athelstan Riley, from the journey we commissioned him to take, and since the receipt of the letter from your Holiness to us, of which he was the bearer.

We have spent the time in careful consideration of the means whereby we may best carry out those designs of assistance to your ancient Church which we and our revered predecessors in this See have so long entertained, and in determining how we can best lay an enduring foundation for the Mission of aid to our fellow Christians in Assyria. The Reverend Rudolph Wahl having been recalled, we have chosen two learned and pious priests of our Church, the Reverend Arthur John Maclean, Canon of the Cathedral Church of Cumbrae, and the Reverend William Henry Browne, both Masters of Arts of the University of Cambridge, and we have sent them to labour amongst your people in the name, and in the power, of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have furthermore acquired buildings at Urmi, and full permission from His Majesty the Shah for our Mission to labour without hindrance amongst those of your people who are dwellers in Persia.

In addition to this station our priests will endeavour, in the course of this year or the next, to establish a second, either at Kochanes, Binter, Asheetha, or some other central place amongst your Turkish dioceses.

We have greatly at heart the education of those youths who will hereafter become bishops, priests, and leaders of the people; and our Mission will aim at gathering into a central school or college such persons as may in the future become the spiritual guides and instructors of your nation. We also concur in your anxiety to have printed the ancient service-books of your Church, and have sent with our Mission a suitable copying-press for that purpose.

We have written in our former letter, and do now repeat with earnestness, that nothing is more contrary to our wishes than that any should be drawn away from the flock of your Church into new and strange folds, and our object in sending this Mission to your country is so to strengthen and illuminate your ancient Church that she may be enabled to withstand all hostile attacks and bring up her children in the true faith of Christ and life in Him.

We have commissioned our beloved son in Christ, Athelstan Riley, to conduct our Mission priests to your country, and to present

them to your Holiness with this letter, and we shall await with anxiety the report which he will bring.

Commending your Holiness and your flock to the protection of Almighty God, we wish you many healthful and happy days in this world, and the reward of eternal life in that which is to come.

And we remain always your faithful brother in Christ our Lord.

(Signed) EDWD: CANTUAR:

L. S.

Given at our Palace at Lambeth in London, under our hand and seal, this second day of June, the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and eighty-six.

VI.

The Patriarch Mar Shimoon, Catholicos of the East, *to the* Archbishop of Canterbury.

(Translated from the original Syriac.)

Reuben Simeon, by Divine grace Patriarch, Catholicos of the East, serving the See of Mar Addai and Mar Mari; to our brother well-beloved in our Lord, Mar Edward, Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of All England, and Metropolitan, complete in reverence and honour; peace and grace and blessing from God the Father, and His Son Jesus Christ our Saviour, and the Holy Spirit our Sanctifier.

For a long time we have expected with ardent desire the fulfilment of this our request. For although there have aforetime been found mediators between us and the holy predecessors of your Lordship in the see which you serve to the glory of God, yet it seemed to us that the praised and beloved Athelstan Riley, praiseworthy for zeal and good works, when he first journeyed to us by your command for the fulfilment of our entreaty; for his diligence and care was a faithful mediator for the fulfilment of this business of great honour and good reward which by the will of the Governor of times have been kept in His treasury for your Lordship.

Now by your care and kindness our desire has been fulfilled and our expectation accomplished by the peaceful and blessed arrival of the two chosen God-fearing priests, teachers expert in the learning of the University of Cambridge, the Reverend Arthur John Maclean, Canon of the Cathedral Church of Cumbrae, and the Reverend William Henry Browne, honourable and illustrious, your two missionaries who, adorned with their own praiseworthy dispositions and virtues, are fitly entrusted with the apostolate and endued with the name of our Lord.

By the hand of our beloved in the Lord Athelstan Riley, and

with overflowing joy, we have received your letters full of love and consolation for the future of our nation. And we thank God for His wonderful and unspeakable dispensation, who in His overflowing mercies has visited us by your means in the midst of the tempests of this our evil and troubled time. Moreover we thank you greatly for the labours of your solicitude for us.

For a short time these honoured priests are visiting us, they are returning to Urmia to prepare a house for a school. Then they will freely decide where it is most convenient and needful to establish a second according to their readiness for labour and diligence and praiseworthy zeal and Christlike love of doing good which clothes them as a spiritual armour.

We trust with firm hope to the good fruits of their labours for the advantage of our community.

We rejoice much at the sending of a printing-press for the printing of Church Service books. We expect that our joy will soon be completed by the fruit which they will bear in our Church.

Again we thank you greatly for your care in forbidding party strifes and divisions among the sheep of our flock. It is unnecessary to tell you how we suffer by these national divisions. Truly we trust in God, that in His mercy and for the glory of His name, and for the sake of the labours and virtues of the holy founders of this Eastern Church, He will unite all her members through your kind and willing help, and will restore the former honour with which she was endued.

The poverty and temporal privations and dearth of instruction and teaching caused by the oppressions and frauds and takings captive and murders and conspiracies which have happened to us in time past, and some of which even now happen in our inaccessible and distant region, these have compelled some men to take refuge among strangers to find some rest.

It is evident that we need balm for our wounds and the binding up of our sores and bruises and efficacious medicines of the body and of the soul, lest we should perish.

We have besought our praised and beloved Athelstan Riley, the bearer of our letter, to inform your Lordship fully about the oppressors and impoverishers, and of those who cause suffering to our nation scattered and disseminated in the dominions of two kingdoms, in the evil and harmful neighbourhood of the Kurds; and about their crooked doings which we suffer in various places, defrauding peaceful sojourners of their lands and inheritance from ages.

With fervency of heart we pray to God the Lord of all for the prosperity and exaltation which is kept by the arm of the Most High for the illustrious kingdom of England, and for the safety of all its inhabitants, and especially for the welfare of your Lordship, begging of Him that He may grant to you length of years and life abounding in good things in this world, and the crown of glory which is kept for labourers in the spiritual vineyard in that world which does not pass away for the sake of which we are.

We complete this our letter with the seal of our love, always remaining in faithfulness your brother in Christ our Lord.

REUBEN SIMEON.

L. S.

Given in the cell of Kochanes, in the mountains of Assyria, on the bank of Pishon the River of Eden.

And sealed with the Patriarchal seal which we use. On the 10th day of the blessed Ab (August) in the year 1886 of our Lord.

Funds are needed urgently and immediately. Subscriptions (annual or for a term of years) specially desired.

Those who desire further information on the work of this Mission should apply to the Rev. G. C. FLETCHER, 7 Trinity Square, E.C., or to the Rev. R. MILBURN BLAKISTON, 2, Dean's Yard, Westminster, S.W., from whom the following publications and photographs may be obtained; and to whom, or to the Rev. H. W. TUCKER, Secretary S.P.G., 19, Delahay Street, S.W., contributions may be forwarded.

Narrative of a visit to Kurdistan in 1884; *7d. post free.*

Report on the Foundation of the Mission in 1886, with Map; *7d. post free.*

(*Both these pamphlets contain very interesting letters from the Oriental prelates.*)

Address delivered by the Archbishop of Canterbury in Lambeth Palace Chapel on June 2nd, 1886, the morning of the departure of the Assyrian Mission; *4d. post free.*

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